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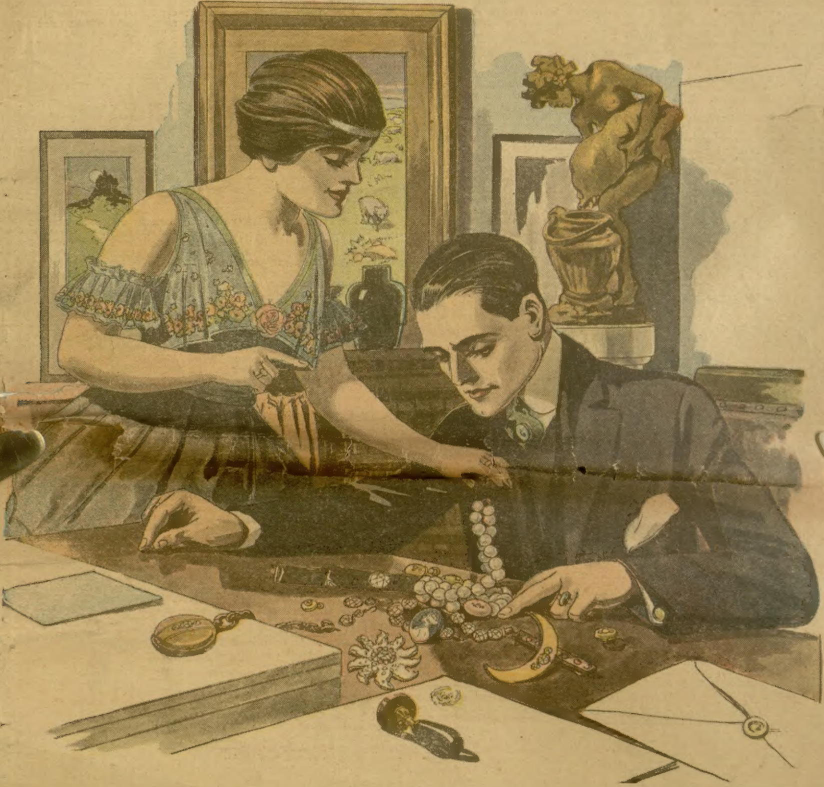
CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XLIV, NO. 13. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 1916. SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS.



The Middle Drawer

By Agnes Louise Provost

"OH, ARE you going out?"

Headley paused in the doorway and looked blankly at his wife's radiant toilet. The abrupt question might have meant either disappointment or annoyance.

"Yes, I have an engagement. Is there anything you wish?"

The careful pleasantness of her tone measured the distance that had come to stretch between them. He shook his head.

"[illegible] that need detain you," he said shortly, and moved aside to let her pass. There was something of sheer fatigue in the movement, and for a moment she hesitated.

"I am sorry," she ventured, and her voice was gentler. "Mrs. Farringdon telephoned me this morning, and I promised. We are going to the opera."

"Those Farringdons again?" His brows went together in quick irritation. "I wish you would drop that crowd."

It brought a flush to her cheeks and a brightness to her eyes which might have warned him if he had been less rasped in every jangling nerve.

"Mr. and Mrs. Farringdon," she said slowly, "have been exceedingly kind to me. I am frequently a guest in their house, and they have made me one of their party many times because my husband could not find time nor inclination to accompany me. I cannot understand why you should take pleasure in criticising my friends."

"Friends!" His voice rasped in spite of himself. "Peter Farringdon is an old ghoul, and it makes me sick to see him look at you. And his wife's friendship—can't you see that all you mean to her is to keep pestilent little whelps like Freddy Brewster and young Renvil dangling around?"

There was a moment of blasting silence. Headley, conscious that he had said the unforgivable, seemed to feel her scorn of him prickle along his skin, but he stood his ground doggedly. Her face flinched as tho he had struck it, and then she faced him with eyes and cheeks aflame. Even in his irritation he looked at her with a dull wonder. She was very beautiful, with her dazzling skin and gentian eyes, and the brown-gold hair that shone under the lights. Of course he had always known it, in a way, but tonight his harassed mind became strugglingly conscious of the delicate perfection she had attained in the three years since they had left home. Her gown was a thing of wonderful simplicity and costliness, the pearls at her neck glowed warmly, and she adorned them both.

"How can you be so—so unspeakable!" she exclaimed breathlessly. Anger and a woman's offended delicacy vibrated in her voice. Then calm, of a kind, came back to her. "Richard, I must ask you to remember that you are speaking of my friends. As for Mr. Renvil, I believe he will be with us tonight, and I see no reason to object. I have always found him agreeable and courteous, and never vulgar."

The tightened line of his lips was the only answer he gave. Little devils of irritation and despondency were tearing at him, and he was afraid to speak, horribly afraid. He heard the faint tremor in her voice as she spoke again.

"There is something I have been intending to say to you for a long time. I think it would be better if we understood each other now. Will you sit down?"

He shook his head and leaned against the door jamb with arms folded, grimly waiting. He knew what was coming, and he could neither beg nor protest—not now. Her voice seemed to float somewhere around his head, low and bitter and passionate.

"I presume it is quite useless to assure you that neither Mr. Renvil nor any other man has anything to do with my decision. But it happens to be the truth. I am going to leave you, because our life together has become intolerable. I am a part of the furnishings of your house, something to be put at the head of your table, but in your life you have no room for me. You have no room for anything but making money."

Headley's face went gray under her strictures. For an instant it seemed that he would be stung into retort, but he said nothing. The lines of his mouth hardened, his eyes strayed toward the gleaming pearls at her throat and jerked away again. She saw it, and flushed faintly.

"You have given me costly gifts," she granted, "but you could not give me yourself. I share neither your troubles nor your pleasures. I scarcely know hether you have them. You give me oney to spend, and leave me alone. d when the monotony is too appalling and I am driven to find my di[illegible] insult your wife with suspicion. I have endured it as long as I can."

"I am sorry you feel that way about it," he responded stiffly. "If you have made up your mind to see things in that light, I presume there is nothing I can say to convince you otherwise."

"Oh, I know it sounds petty!" Her hands moved in a weary gesture. "They are all little things—two years of little things, but it is what they mean that counts. They mean that love is dead, in you and in me, and I cannot stand living that way. It is too shameful. That is why I must go away. What you have said tonight has merely made it a little easier to tell you, that is all. As for the rest, you may take what action you wish."

He stood perfunctorily aside and let her pass, her face averted and a little pale. He heard the soft whisper of her gown as she ascended the stairs, and from a distance the cool sweetness of her voice, giving instructions to her maid. Then he went down the hall to the room given over to his own use, a place which was more than half office, with its looming desk and private telephone. This was where he spent most of his time, when he was home at all. He dropped heavily into a chair and leaned folded arms on the desk.

"Richard!"

"Yes?"

It was his wife's voice at the door, and he shivered at the sound. She stood in the doorway, holding the heavy curtain back with one hand, a gorgeous wrap of sapphire velvet and fur covering her evening gown.

"I am sorry to have disturbed you." Her tone was gentler than it had been. One might almost have caught a trace of wistfulness in it. "I only wished to tell you that I have told Cynthia that I am leaving tomorrow for a visit."

"Very well." For his soul he could not have said more.

For a second longer she hesitated in the doorway. Then somewhere in the back of the house a bell buzzed, and a door opened in front. He heard a man's voice, pleasantly pitched. So Renvil had come for her!

"Good-by—Dick."

"Good night," he said briefly, and the curtain dropped. It seemed as tho she stood motionless on the other side for a second or two, but he must have been mistaken. A moment later he heard the clear music of her voice, greeting Renvil. He moistened dry lips and shivered again.

With a dull sort of deliberation he took out his keys and unlocked the middle drawer of his desk. Something in there blinked back at him with a subdued gleam, and he leaned his arms on the edge of the drawer and stared at it. All afternoon his mind's eye had seen it lying there, a little, blunt, efficient thing which could part a man from his troubles so quickly, and all afternoon he had been feverishly driving at other things to push it away. He wondered why. It didn't matter.

She would not be back before midnight.

For a long time he sat very quiet, until certain muffled sounds over his head aroused him to outer things. At first he scarcely noticed them, but presently they began to take on meaning. They were bringing his wife's trunks down for Cynthia to pack. She was going away in the morning.

He reached for his hat and overcoat and went out. A few hours more or less—what did they matter?

The night air was better than the closeness of the house. He turned without any particular sense of direction, but insensibly he chose the quieter and dimmer ways, and walked steadily, with head down.

A dull sense of failure tormented him. He had been so great in promise, so arrogantly sure of success, and he had failed. He had failed in the things that men count worth while; he had failed even in the primal business of keeping his wife's love. He could not sue for it now. He knew he had made things worse tonight, and that he had been rough and ungracious of speech, but brain and tongue seemed to have slid away from his control.

The few people that he passed looked at him half-curiously. He nearly ran into two absorbed young creatures who were walking slowly, arm tucked in arm. He brushed aside with a muttered apology. Lovers, these, and quite unashamed. Was it only six years since he and Constance had first been engaged?

Across the street the high wall of the park confronted him, and he turned sharply, and walked a little faster. He wa[illegible] quieter streets [illegible] by with increasing frequency, the high glare of electric lights was over and around him, and imposing housefronts began to make way for shops where delectable things from the ends of the earth could be had for transcendent prices. He remembered how he had enjoyed stopping with Constance in just such shops as these, during their first exciting year in New York, and letting her buy to her heart's content. She loved these dainty, costly things. And the flower shops! How long was it since he had bought her flowers? He winced noticeably as he passed a gorgeously banked window, and at the next corner he turned and struck across to Broadway.

He had walked aimlessly before, but now he directed his steps with a certain dogged determination. The theaters had just given forth their crowds, a slow-moving jam on the pavements, and in the street streams of big motors and taxis and crawling surface cars. Just ahead there was a denser stream, black shot with rainbow colors, rolling out of the Metropolitan. The street there was packed from curb to curb.

He was among them in a few minutes, shouldering his way thru, unconscious of impatient glances. Just what he intended to do, or what explanation he should make if she saw him, he did not pause to consider. He only knew that Constance was somewhere in that crowd, and that the hunger to see her once more was gripping him unbearably.

Then he saw her. Peter Farringdon was on one side of her and Renvil on the other, with Mrs. Farringdon, rather flushed and ornate, bringing up in the rear with that young Brewster whom he found only a degree less obnoxious than Renvil. They passed within a few feet of him, Constance with the gleam of the lights on her gold-brown hair, and her skin transparently fair above the sapphire velvet wrap. He heard Peter Farringdon's thick, urgent voice.

"Oh, not home yet! We're going to drop in Sherry's first. Of course you're coming!"

He saw Renvil bend his smooth and offensively good-looking face toward hers, and heard her murmuring voice, which presently went softly into laughter. He had never seen her look so brilliantly flushed and gay.

The strained eagerness of his face changed subtly to hardness. What did she care? He turned and made his way to the street corner, and stood waiting for a car. He began to realize that he was hideously tired.

The ride home was a sort of dull nightmare. As he let himself in his own door he became aware of some one rising in the drawing-room on his left, and turned with puzzled greeting.

"Oh, Beekman, is that you?"

There was relief, if he had noticed it, on the face of the trim little gray man in evening clothes who had been awaiting him for fully an hour. He had looked after Headley's legal work for the past three years, but that was not precisely why he had come.

"I fear I am a late caller, Mr. Headley, but I happened to be coming this way, and I thought it might be well to stop in and see if there was anything you wanted me to take up in the morning."

Therein the gray little man was not quite frank. He knew very well that nothing more could be done. If he had admitted it, he would have said that his client had been most uncomfortably on his mind ever since he had left Headley's haggard face behind him at five o'clock that afternoon. And so he had left his club an hour before his usual time, and had come rather noticeably out of his way to—well, just to drop in.

"Come in here," said Headley abruptly, "where we can talk."

He led the way to the office-like room, and the lawyer's eyes appraised it curiously. Desk and telephone and jumbled papers! No wonder the man looked fagged. Headley motioned his guest to an easy chair, and dropped into the one in front of his desk.

"No, Beekman, I'm obliged to you, but there's nothing further to be done, except pick the bones, and there will be plenty to do that. I can't hold the smash off another twenty-four hours, and I don't know that I want to. I'd rather let it come and get it over."

"And clear the way for a new start," Beekman suggested pleasantly, but Headley shook his head.

"I know when I'm down and out," he said grimly.

"My dear Headley!" Beekman leaned forward and protested soberly, his watchful gray eyes looking from Headley's haggard face to the nervous movement of Headley's fingers on the edge of the desk. "No man in his early thirties, with his health and brains intact, can say that he is down and out. Others have been caught short in a panicky market, and have fought their way back to their old places. Why not you?"

Headley stared somberly down at the desk. "I have failed," he said harshly. "I have failed in every way that a man can fail, because I've been a fool. I don't belong here. I'm out of place, and I'm just finding it out. I was brought up in a small town, and my father left me a good business there. I made it a bigger business, made it the biggest business in town, and then I went in for starting banks and the rest of the usual stuff. The big duck in the little puddle, you understand. And because I had taught my home town things I thought I could show New York. I've made a lot of money and lived to the top of my income—and gone to smash. Just a fool."

The gray little man was silent. If he had never fallen from dizzy heights, neither had he ever scaled them. Headley's fingers ruffled impatiently thru his thick hair.

"I don't know why I'm whining like this to you," he apologized, "but you've been pretty good about things, and it's a relief to talk."

"You've been carrying a heavy load," his legal adviser reminded him. "I think I shall have to get into a conspiracy with Mrs. Headley and make you take a rest."

"Mrs. Headley knows nothing of this."

The little man blinked discreetly. "Ah!" he murmured, vaguely polite, and considerately looked away. Somewhere in the hall a clock struck, sounding twelve. Headley stirred uneasily, and his guest read the signs and arose.

"Good night, Headley. I'll see you tomorrow."

"Good night, Beekman."

They shook hands, which was not usual. Then the outer door closed on the little gray man, but he lingered on the steps for a few moments. One may come to a man's house around midnight on a fairly flimsy excuse, but one may scarcely insist on staying all night.

"Well, I hope I haven't botched it," he muttered cryptically, and stepped briskly out for the corner and the nearest taxi.

Back in the little office room Headley sat very still. Time was flying. Constance might be in at any moment, and he ought to write some brief instructions for Beekman, some that he had not dared say to that shrewd-eyed little man. His hand went out to the middle drawer of his desk. Then he paused, rigid.

"May I come in?"

He sprang to his feet and faced her, almost guiltily. She came in slowly, as tho doubtful of her reception, and she carried a curious gay burden in her arms. Her brilliant color was gone.

"Mr. Beekman told me." There was a flutter in her voice that made him grip the edge of the desk savagely with one hand. "He didn't mean to, but he thought I knew, and then I made him tell me the rest. I left the others—they went on to Sherry's—and I found him waiting here for you."

She moved closer, her breath coming softly and her eyes fixed on his downcast face as she laid her light burden on his desk. It rippled and glittered and gleamed on the dull mahogany, the pearls that she had worn that night, the sapphire and diamond set that he had given her on their first Christmas here, the emerald necklace that she loved, and a winking medley of rings and pins and jeweled trifles. For some curious woman's reason she had not brought them comfortably down in the case which marked them as her own, but poured them out loosely, by prodigal handfuls, as she had gathered them up.

"There!" she said hurriedly. "They will help a little, won't they? They are awfully expensive, and you bought them all, you know. Mr. Beekman said that everything would have to go, so if these would help—just a little——"

"Don't!" he protested sharply. "What I have done I have done myself. I can't take them."

Back of the sharpne[illegible] his vo[illegible]e wa[illegible] not quite steady. He half turne[illegible] from her, his hands thrust deep [illegible] pockets, as [illegible] fought the [illegible] devils that were baiting his [illegible]trol.

"I did not know you were in [illegible] Her voice was very low. "I [illegible] I spoke unkindly. But I should like very much to do something, if I may."

"That is very—kind." He spoke haltingly. "I am sure I—appreciate it, but I am afraid you don't realize what you are saying. Even if I could take them, they—don't you see, they may be the only asset you will have? I've been a selfish brute and a failure, but I haven't come to robbing women. When this mess is cleared up I shan't have a hundred dollars to my name, nor a cent of credit. Do you know what that means?"

"Why—why, yes!"

There was a queer thrill in the way she said it, a little breathlessly, with shining eyes searching his face. In his desperate earnestness he only stared at her, and she could almost see the quiver of tortured nerves. And so many other things! She took a step nearer, and the color flooded her cheeks gloriously.

"Don't you know, Dick? It means beginning all over again, and—forgetting all the rest. We'll go away, Dick, back home, or to some little place where beginnings aren't so hard. And you will have a position, or a little business, and we'll rent a tiny house, just the dearest, littlest house, and I'll take care of it and wait for you on the front steps when you come home nights, and—oh, Dick!"

He had drawn her swiftly to him, and his face was pressed against her own. She heard the gulping breath that was almost a sob, and felt the long shudder than went over him.

"Are you sure, Connie? You won't regret it? It isn't just pity?"

"I'm sure, Dick!" He felt her tremulous laugh against his cheek. "Are you?"

"Oh, my girl, you don't know how I have wanted you!"

His hands tightened on her shoulders. She could not know this thankfulness that the middle drawer of the desk was closed on the thing she need never see. He looked down at her with a sort of sober joy. "My girl!" he repeated unsteadily, and drew her close again.

* * *

Usually a girl whose fr[illegible] name Mae looks more like Ju[illegible]y or August.

Strong Jacob of Eden

Or, The Wilderness Waif

By William H. Manning

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Begun in No. 12, March 18. Subscriptions can be begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER V.

THERE was soon the usual daily stir in the glade. Father Caleb, his wife, and Jacob Lee were attending to the ailing Indians who had come from the neighboring village; Martha Otis was instructing a class in English; Judith Ashwood watched beside the forest waif, and Thomas, grumbling under his breath, superintended the household work of the Indian women. The only idlers were Ballard, Ben, and Sandy.

The latter occasionally claimed to have a return of his malady, and when griped by pain he doubled up and grimaced uninvitingly, but after periods of relief came he talked with the other woodsmen. If, however, Sandy had a secret, he kept it well.

After the school hour some of the pupils returned to their village, others remaining in the glade. Ballard was presently approached by one of the latter, a girl of 10 years known as Abigail. She was a regular member of the missionary's family, being an orphan he had formally adopted. Familiarity with English had come of three years of tuition, and natural gifts made her as bright as her serious manner rendered her quaint. She had keenness of observation and directness of speech that often caused surprise and sometimes embarrassment, as the rover discovered on this occasion.

They had not talked long before she asked a question with abruptness and [illegible] gravity.

"[illegible] you love Judith?"

[illegible]d, of late a man of the woods, had lost some part of the training of early years, and he was not a little discomposed.

"Why, everybody likes her," he managed to reply.

"Do you love her?" repeated the child.

Altho he recalled that the missionary sense of the verb was a variation of its meaning elsewhere, the catechism was still confusing.

"I know one who loves her, and that is Abigail."

"But do you?" she persisted.

"We all have a high regard for Judith."

"Nobody else is like her," Abigail declared. "She has my heart. If all were like Judith the world would be very happy. The sun shines where she walks."

Still oddly grave, the speaker blinked wisely at her companion.

"Brother Jacob loves her!" she added.

Knowing that the name was that by which the new assistant was to be called at the mission, it was clear who was meant, but the child went on without waiting for an answer.

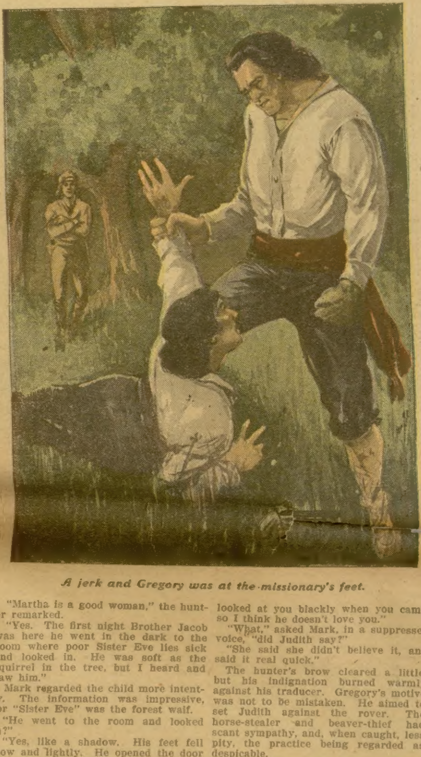
"Brother Jacob looks at her. I see him when they think I see nothing. He seemed afraid of her at first, but not quite so much now. Is she so good that some need be in awe of her? Perhaps Brother Jacob thinks so, but he loves her too much to keep his eyes still. He looks a lot, and studies her, oh, so hard!"

Viewing the bright eyes before him, Ballard was not surprised that they had delved deep in hidden things.

"I asked Judith if she loved Brother Jacob," Abigail pursued, "and she shivered. She wouldn't tell me why, but she acts strangely when in sight of him. She was very unhappy when she knew he was coming here. She didn't tell me that, but I saw it. Why does she try to keep away from him now? Is she afraid of Brother Jacob?"

Ballard was silent. He was not certain that good breeding permitted him to listen to such talk, but could not bring himself to check her, for some things he had noticed were recalled, and new ideas entered his mind.

"I wonder," said Abigail, with an abrupt shift, "if Brother Jacob loves Martha Otis?"



A jerk and Gregory was at the missionary's feet.

"Martha is a good woman," the hunter remarked.

"Yes. The first night Brother Jacob was here he went in the dark to the room where poor Sister Eve lies sick and looked in. He was soft as the squirrel in the tree, but I heard and saw him."

Mark regarded the child more intently. The information was impressive, for "Sister Eve" was the forest waif.

"He went to the room and looked in?"

"Yes, like a shadow. His feet fell slow and lightly. He opened the door—oh, so softly! Martha was there, but she did not watch well. She was asleep, and so was Sister Eve. Brother Jacob looked a long while, and then closed the door and went back to his own room. Nobody saw him but me."

"Whom have you told of this?"

"Only Brother Jacob. He said he was in need of water to drink, and went for it, and lost his way and opened the wrong door. He asked me to say nothing about it, for he didn't want anybody blamed because water had not been put in his chamber."

"Was that all?"

"Yes."

Knowing that Abigail was regarded as absolutely truthful, the new assistant and suspicion became more strongly coupled in Mark's mind. He did not believe desire for water or the presence of Martha Otis had taken him to the room of sickness. What, then, was it? The waif had been there. The hunter frowned deeply. What lay back of Jacob's interest?

Abigail changed the subject with her usual abruptness.

"Did you ever steal beaver-skins?" she asked seriously.

"What's that?" ejaculated Ballard.

"The beaver captain told Judith that men said you stole skins from traps, but I don't think you would do that. He looked at you blackly when you came, so I think he doesn't love you."

"What," asked Mark, in a suppressed voice, "did Judith say?"

"She said she didn't believe it, and said it real quick."

The hunter's brow cleared a little, but his indignation burned warmly against his traducer. Gregory's motive was not to be mistaken. He aimed to set Judith against the rover. The horse-stealer and beaver-thief had scant sympathy, and, when caught, less pity, the practice being regarded as despicable.

At that moment Abigail was called away. She left Mark with his mind in a whirl. Abigail was a child, and, being so, those who knew her little would be apt to speak freely in her presence. Gregory had done this, and scored a mistake. His malevolence was revealed, and a good deal more with it. Being slandered, Ballard was not likely to forget.

A sudden desire for the solitude of the forest came upon him, and he went there without delay, his mind in confusion. Judith, Captain Gregory, and Brother Jacob swept thru his thoughts. Deeply interesting as was the latest matter of the first two, it was free from mystery, but not so the facts as to the new assistant.

Why had he given so much and such strange attention to the waif? Why had he taken such immediate and stealthy measures to get view of her? Ben Reed had described the knave who abandoned her as having a black beard, and Jacob was of dark complexion. A razor would soon remove a beard. The former thread of suspicion against the new assistant grew in size.

Because it was more acute, the charge by Gregory that he was a thief soon crowded other subjects away. The partisan was revealed as an open enemy, and Mark intended to deal with him as such. The malicious slander was not to be tolerated, and its maker must be brought to task.

An hour of meditation swept all mental unsteadiness away, and he walked back to the mission with firm steps. Reaching the inner square, he at first saw no one there, but a surprise came swiftly. A man turned the corner of a building and came face to face with him. It was Gregory. Mutually impressed by the meeting, both stopped at once. The captain seemed to be slow in getting his bearings, but presently he ran his gaze over the hunter superciliously.

"Ah!" he spoke deliberately, "so we meet again."

Mark scented trouble—it lurked in his companion's tone, motions, and expression—but he preserved unruffled composure.

"Yes. I had supposed you were far down the river."

"And I," Gregory returned, "had supposed you far into the woods, but, of course, the bread of idleness is to be eaten here."

"Is that why you have returned?"

The last words were due to the captain's sneering hostility, and the opening for the retort was too good to be missed. Gregory betrayed some confusion at being so well hit, but his next words proved an intention to force a quarrel.

"If so, Caleb Harper is no loser. When I visit here I leave that which is of more value than what I eat. I am a worker, not a wanderer of the woods, too poor and indolent to own more than a rifle. Unlike some others, I'm no beggar!"

"Nor, perhaps," questioned Mark, looking his insulter full in the eyes, "a stealer of fur-bearing animals from other men's traps?"

A shade of annoyance passed over Gregory's face.

"Oho!" he exclaimed. "I see you've been worming information from women."

"Whatever information I possess on [illegible] subject named, it certainly did not come from [illegible]. Details are unnecessary, but, Captain Gregory, I understand you have represented me as a thief from traps."

"Well," replied the partisan, more guardedly, "certain tales are told by the trappers' campfires."

"Concerning me? Be specific!"

"I decline to be catechised."

"Further question and reply are unnecessary. Your failure to make denial tells the whole story. I am not a quarrelsome man, but the ethics of the trapping-grounds place a ban alike on the thief and the spreader of falsehood, especially if the falsifier dares not back up publicly what he tells privately to further his selfish aims. Such a man is a coward."

"Do you think," asked Gregory, huskily, "that I will submit to talk like this?"

"Do you think I will submit to being called a thief from the traps?" Ballard demanded steadily. "If you are an honest man you will either give the source of your charge or withdraw it."

"I will do neither, but the man who calls me a coward shall answer for it. Bad blood is better spilled than hoarded."

"Suit yourself," the hunter returned calmly.

"There is a glade half a mile to the west, hard by the tree riven in half by lightning. Will you be there, an hour before sunset, with pistol and knife?"

"Trust me; I will be there."

"Alone?"

"Yes. And you?"

"Alone! Notice that Caleb approaches. This is to the death—eh?"

"To the death!" Ballard evenly answered. "Deplorable as the necessity is, the call for punishment is stronger. I will be there!"

CHAPTER VI.

FATHER CALEB joined the woodsmen, and hostile talk was suspended. The missionary, unsuspicious of trouble afoot, began to speak in his usual kindly way, and from the conversation Ballard learned the alleged reason for Captain Gregory's return.

According to the partisan, he had met a subordinate officer of the fur company on the river below, and had intrusted the trip to the coast to him, having himself preferred to return and seek trade with the Indian trappers along the upper river.

This was reasonable to Father Caleb, but Mark remembered that it clashed with what he had said when last at the mission, and he was wise enough to suspect that the return was due to a determination not to leave him free to enjoy Judith's company unwatched.

The rover was calm, but his indignation was thoroly aroused, and he did not shrink from the hostile meeting with Gregory. Altho opposed to brawls and bloodshed, he was sufficiently a man of the wild places to smart under unjust accusation, and welcome satisfaction in what was regarded, in the woods, as the only way of maintaining his honor.

Leaving his companions, presently, he turned a corner and saw Jacob Lee in conversation with Father Caleb's wife. Looking, the hunter was mentally admitting that the new assistant did not seem wholly like an evil-doer, when something odd happened.

Several times before the rover had noticed a peculiar motion on Jacob's part—a movement of his hand halfway to his face and a sudden checking of it. Repeated, now, it brought a flood of light to Ballard.

It was revealed to him that the assistant, now smooth of face, had lately worn a beard; that he had been in the habit of stroking it, and that, forgetting that it was gone, he often started to make the old motion and as often checked his hand midway.

A fresh wave of suspicion rolled over the watcher. The discarded beard must have been black, and that, according to Ben Reed, was a characteristic of Sister Eve's abductor.

Banishing the matter from his mind, Mark obeyed an impulse, left the mission glade, and entered the woods. He was glad to leave everybody else behind for the time. Ben Reed, his one confidential friend, was absent, following up their common idea that the red stain by the mission building had to do with the Indians, so he was left to himself.

For some time he wandered aimlessly, making eccentric deviations unconsciously, and then lay down in a tangle of trees. He was fast falling asleep when the sharp cracking of a dry stick caused him to look up quickly. He saw Sandy Murch a few rods away.

Sandy was busy. Bending forw[illegible] his gaze fixed on the [illegible] went on steadily. The rover came quickly to his feet. He knew that a trail was being followed, and suspected that it was his own, made early in his ramble. Anxious to have the point settled, he fell in behind the gnarled man, and trailed him as he trailed his predecessor.

The double quest went on until March reached the tree where Ballard had lain, and then, a little later, the point where the counter-trailing began. There Sandy paused, scratching his knobby head, and Mark, smiling grimly, turned back and was soon at the mission.

As he looked at it, certain things had been definitely settled. Pain-racked Sandy had no pain, but had been left at Father Caleb's merely as Gregory's spy. This might mean much or little, but it was a logical suspicion that perhaps he was there to watch Ballard and see how much he was with Judith. With the missionary so single-minded and loyal to his optimistic ideals, it was a problem how the fellow could be unmasked and driven away from the forest home.

Half an hour later Sandy returned. He looked long and critically at Mark from a distance, but was careful not to go near him. In this desire he had his way, for the rover did not care to speak with him then.

The afternoon wore on, the sun marched toward the western horizon, the shadows lengthened and lay in the forest in bars and eccentric figures of black side by side with dividing lines of yellow.

Mark Ballard took his weapons and, confiding in no one, went composedly to the deeper forest, soon arriving at the glade where he was to meet Donald Gregory. He was first there, and sat down at ease, but the partisan was not long in coming.

The two stood, grim of face, apparently alone in the solitary break in the wilderness.

"This opening," began the captain, abruptly, "is just about a good pistol shot wide."

"Exactly," agreed the hunter, calmly. "I don't believe in wasting lead. At this distance I, for one, can shoot the head from the humming bird."

"I do not hunt such game, myself."

"Have you ever tried hunting men?"

"Not out of wantonness."

"Does your courage waver?" sneered Gregory. "I know that some are so constituted that cowardice is natural to them, especially when with a dead shot before them. Does your courage flag?"

"Not perceptibly," was the even reply.

"Your face is pale."

"Yours, Captain, is over-red."

Gregory flushed. It had been his purpose to annoy and intimidate his rival before the first exchange of shots, but the scheme had recoiled upon himself. No man had ever seen him intoxicated, but he drank so freely that, when other men browned in the sun, he reddened, a fact that had caused him some mortification in the past. Even now he felt the well-sped retort.

"Would it not be well," he resumed, with a surly manner, "for us to dig jointly a grave with our knives? The victim of this little affair should be properly buried."

"If grave-digging is done I will let you do it, Captain. I am not here to dig. Still, I am willing to sit and smoke while you work."

"It is a serious thing—this matter of dying. One moment we are in strength and health, but the next the relaxed muscles, the pallid face, the glazing eyes, the hanging jaw, the dead shape! Ugh! it is something awful to contemplate!"

"If I were you, Captain, I would not think about it. Contemplation of such horrors may shake your nerves and spoil your aim."

"Never!" cried the partisan, angrily.

Ballard shook his head solemnly, enjoying the results of the duel of words so maliciously forced upon him.

"Present appearances may be deceptive," he returned calmly.

"I have faced red men and white," Gregory boasted, "and have hunted and been hunted in forest, on plain, in tangled undergrowth and in dark defile. No man ever knew my nerves or eyes to fail me."

"An excellent recommendation, sir. I am glad to hear you so well spoken of."

Gregory growled something not clearly heard and gave up the effort to shake his opponent's nerves. It was time, for, tho he was not himself alarmed, he was angry, and this he knew was to his disadvant[illegible] himself with an [illegible]

"I propose," he said, "that we stand each at a side of the glade, where the shadows shut out troublesome rays of light, and that at a given word each man fires a shot. This done, we will note results."

"The plan is satisfactory," Ballard composedly returned. "Each man is supposed to try no treachery. We need not dwell upon that, but if either does indulge in tricks it will go hard with him."

So saying the hunter walked quietly to a side of the opening. The last words did not please Gregory, but he let them pass without comment.

There was less need for minute arrangements than with men of the clearings. These veterans had seen enemies fight before, and the chosen way of the duel was an old one.

Both stood in place. Advantage was with neither. When the shots were fired it would be a matter of marksmanship and coolness.

"One of us shall count slowly," the Captain pursued. "At 'three' we fire. Who shall count?"

"Yourself!" was the brief response.

The pistols were raised. The men glanced along the barrels. The eventful moment was at hand. Profound silence reigned in the glade. Gregory counted the first number.

CHAPTER VII.

CAPTAIN GREGORY counted the second number, and the fatal third was on his lips when a crashing sounded among the bushes. A man strode into the glade and stopped between them where any shot fired must necessarily strike him. It was Jacob Lee.

"Gentlemen," he said, in a calm, clear voice, "I beg that you will pause. This matter has already gone too far."

Ballard remained composed and silent, but Gregory, after an angry stare and brief hesitation as to his course, answered with impatient sharpness.

"Sir, you don't understand, and can't. Return to the mission. Your place is there."

"Just now there is abundant evidence that my place is here, and that my chance arrival was timely. Gentlemen, will you kindly put up your pistols?"

"Decidedly, we will not!" snapped the partisan.

"Pray think again."

"You meddle with what is none of your business. Ballard, haven't you spirit enough to resent this intrusion?"

"I have no quarrel with Jacob Lee," Mark returned quietly. "When you've finished your conversation with him I am at your service."

"Not to carry on this atrocious work!" declared Jacob.

"Parson," exclaimed Gregory, "your place is at the mission. Will you go away from here?"

"When I have performed a duty. Gentlemen, we were not made to butcher each other. What has led you to this I don't know, but lawless desires bring their own punishment. The violent victory of today becomes the burdensome defeat of tomorrow. Crime is its own avenger!"

If the speaker chose his words like other missionaries he did not look or act like one. His towering figure, strong face, and incisive voice made him like a rock of aggression, rather than a preacher of meekness.

"Enough, enough!" declared Gregory. "End this whimpering interference!"

Jacob advanced toward the captain and held out his hand.

"There shall be no shambles here. Give me your pistol, please!"

"Never!" Gregory cried.

"We can talk just as well without weapons. Your pistol, I say!"

A masterful element back of the calm words, like that of one accustomed to obedience from others, stirred the partisan, who was himself a leader of men. His scant patience was swept away and hot words came.

"Out of my way, or I'll send a bullet thru your contemptible hide, you prating cur!"

He raised his pistol as he spoke, but the big hand of Jacob Lee suddenly closed upon his arm, there was a resistless downward jerk, and Gregory was at the missionary's feet. There he remained, strange pains shooting thru him, together with an inward sense that he had narrowly escaped annihilation. He was quickly released, but Jacob picked up the fallen pistol.

The partisan rose slowly, his forearm aching from that crushing grasp, his shoulder severely wrenched, his legs unsteady. Amazed at the exhibition of great strength, he was mentally upset by a brief superstitious feeling that more than mortal power was back of the humiliation and its results. Something else was even more impressive.

When he was seized and humbled, the motion had been accompanied by a flash of Jacob's eyes that seemed to burn. Violent men he had often seen, but none over whose face had come anything so like destroying lightning as that angry glare of the missionary's eyes. Now the fire had gone out, but emotion of another kind had succeeded it.

"I beg your pardon," said Jacob, huskily, "but you called me an unpleasant name. I forgot myself."

"Perhaps I was hasty," replied Gregory, mechanically, rather than apologetically.

"Pray don't let it occur again," requested the missionary. "I am apt to take such things ill."

Throwing off his agitation he crossed the glade and faced Ballard. The latter had been astonished by the show of great strength, but was calm.

"May I ask for your pistol?" Jacob said quietly.

"Since you have the other, the request is only fair."

The pistol was handed over, and Jacob put both in his pocket.

"I trust, Mr. Ballard, you are willing to drop this dispute?"

"I am not prepared to say 'yes' to that. You have admitted ignorance of its cause, and if here in your present role you should know more. I am told that Captain Gregory accuses me of stealing fur-bearing animals from the traps of other men, and he will neither deny the statement nor give authority. Frankly, I cannot stand idle when called a thief."

"The charge is serious," Jacob admitted. "May I ask, Captain Gregory, if you have proof of what you allege?"

"Until I agree to leave matters to an arbitrator, I have nothing to say," sulkily replied the partisan.

"You both show a fixed purpose which does not please me. Come, gentlemen, advance and shake hands."

"Never!" declared Gregory.

"If Captain Gregory will prove his claim," said Ballard, "I will go from Eden Mission and never return. Until then I refuse to be pacified. You, Mr. Lee, can hardly expect me to rest content under the epithet, 'thief'."

A sudden reply trembled on Jacob's lips, but he checked it, hesitated, eyed the two men with persistent analysis and soon found other words.

"One thing I insist upon. Yonder mission is a place of peace, and its master good, noble, and true-hearted. Visible contentions would fall heavier upon him than on any one else. It will go hard with him who worries Father Caleb!"

Once more Jacob was unlike a missionary. Firm, strong, curt of speech, he was again the masterful man.

"Believe me," quickly returned Ballard, "it is my earnest wish that I may never do that."

"The same here," muttered Gregory, his manner surly.

Jacob surveyed the two critically. He could read men well, and knew that further arguments were useless. Sighing, he abandoned the purpose.

"There is one promise I must have from both of you. I say 'must,' and I mean it fully. Behave yourselves here like reasonable men, and do your mischief after leaving Eden Mission."

"I promise freely," Ballard replied promptly. "The condition is only just."

Gregory, as angry as ever, and, since his humiliation, with two grudges instead of one, had partly recovered his mental poise and prudence.

"I will keep the peace in Father Caleb's domains," he promised.

Jacob was not satisfied, but, aware that he could expect no more, he returned the pistols. His invitation that the duelists would walk with him to the mission being rejected, he saw each go his separate way, and then himself moved homeward with bowed head and thoughtful manner.

Mark Ballard moved up the river with his mind in tranquil state. He had been the insulted party in the quarrel, and, contrary to the usual custom, the challenged party. If, then, he had agreed to the everyday method of settling differences in the wilderness, he saw no reason why his conscience should assail him with reproaches. His thoughts dwelt only briefly on this point, for there was other subject-matter of importance.

The central figure was Ja[illegible] This man—this Goliath of the fores[illegible] this individual of impressive mental and physical force whom the Indian called Strong Jacob—had come forth in a way to emphasize anew his remarkable powers. His way had been the way of a master. He had given orders to men of tried courage and experience in wild life as if he were their superior in a trapping-brigade or military encampment. Even when his words were phrased in the form of advice, the air of command was there. Strange missionary!

But there was more. Jacob's mask of calmness had been temporarily dropped, and passion had flashed up like lightning along a quiet sky. Gregory had called him a "cur"—the act of one who stabs aimlessly—and had immediately been humbled by the insulted man. Mark had seen the great strength which brought the partisan low, and, too, the fierce anger that blazed out of the usually calm face.

He knew, now, that deep passions lay back of Jacob Lee's even exterior, and, having seen, knew that the new assistant would be a dangerous man when fully aroused to action.

Meditating on this, the rover was still walking when he heard the sound of a paddle. Going closer to the river he discovered Ben Reed crossing the stream. He drew his attention, the canoe was turned toward the bank and soon touched near Ballard's feet. Ben sprang out, drew the bark well ashore, and shook hands with his ally.

"Glad to get back thus fur!" he declared.

"I thought you might return today."

"I've struck the trail."

"Your manner is serious. Well?"

"I visited three Injun villages and found all quiet. It was so with them reds who are ruled by Bending Willow, who, you know, is the man among whose people Father Caleb works. You know of them—an offshoot of Bending Willow's race, but wilder-blooded."

"Yes. No Chinooks nor Clatsops, they. Well?"

"With them is a warrior named Heart-That-Is-Strong, a Crow Injun by birth, but who left his own people a score of years ago because of some ruction and has long been with Red Beaver. That Crow is a savage fellow all thru. He had a son, Leaping Pan-

(Continued on Page 23.)

At Barclay House

Or, A Detective Puzzle

By Will Lisenbee

[Copyright 1916 by W. D. Boyce Co.]
Begun in No. 11, March 11. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE story told by the station agent gave Mark Sheldon much food for thought. It served to envelop the character of Basil Smoot in a still deeper veil of mystery. Who was he? What had brought him to Barclay House? How had the Pemberton necklace come into his possession? In what way had he been associated with the two men who had come to the station the night before, and how did they know that he had the necklace in his possession?

Mark pondered deeply over these questions. Had Basil Smoot been a member of a gang of crooks? How did it happen that the mysterious "Dave" who had come to claim the body and effects of the deceased had obtained a letter of introduction from the District Attorney of St. Louis? He turned to Hartman and put the last question to him.

"I should say it was forgery," said the station agent.

"Of course," nodded Mark, "but one cannot get by the fact that the letter was written on one of the district attorney's letter heads, without having the suspicion that there may be some one in the lawyer's office who is in league with the band of crooks on the outside. Such things have happened, and this affair is worth looking into. Maybe it would be a pretty good idea to get [illegible] information to the prosecuting attorney as soon as [illegible] inquiries of the district attorney, and it may open up a new lead."

After Hartman had taken his departure, Mark went out on the veranda, where he sat for some time smoking in silence.

He had seen very little of Katharine Turk during the past few days. Mrs. Baggs and her niece always took their meals in their own apartments, and Miss Turk had not been out much since her accident, tho he had seen her on the grounds two or three times, and at one of these times she had stopped in the path to talk to him a few moments about her collection of autumn leaves. She had also been collecting some geological specimens, and once, when she had been examining some of these thru a magnifying glass as she sat at a table on the porch, she asked Mark to look at one of them, which he did, conscious of a sense of deepest pleasure as his head was bent close to hers.

The specimen appeared to be some sort of quartz, of transparent whiteness, evidently containing a large per cent of mineral, probably zinc blend; but Mark was not an authority on minerals, nor was he interested in anything else just then but the girl who was bending very close to him. He noticed vaguely that she was not wearing the ring with the broken hearts, and somehow it gave him a certain sense of pleasure.

They talked for a few moments about her collection of specimens on the table, but he soon discovered that he was totally incompetent to give her any information on the subject, much to his regret.

"I have to do something to while away the time," she said, smiling, "and if I should happen to discover a gold mine on your land, you might find me staking a claim, as we used to do in Colorado."

"Then I hope your prospecting may be successful," he said, with a flush of pleasure, "especially if it should be the means of prolonging your visit here."

And so it happened as Mark sat on the veranda in the warm October night, he discovered that his mind, instead of turning to the mystery that surrounded the Smoot case, persistently dwelt on the girl, who was not only a mystery to him, but a charming mystery that was more alluring than any he had ever attempted to explore.

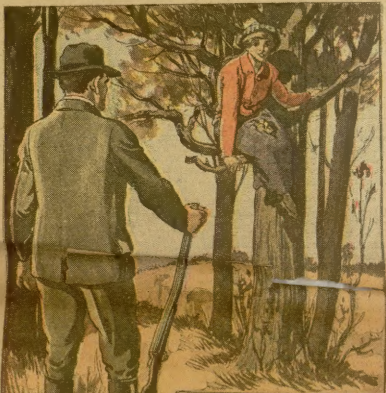
He found his mind continually reverting to her, and half-unconsciously he would be wondering when he should see her again, and he frequently caught himself planning some way by which he might see her if but for a moment. He was thinking of all these things when he heard a light step on the veranda, and turning, he saw Miss Turk approaching.

He rose hastily to greet her. The beams of the rising moon fell on her face, on which there was a visible pallor.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Sheldon," she said, in a low voice that betrayed a shade of emotion. "May I speak to you just a moment?"

"Certainly, Miss Turk; it will be a pleasure," he said, placing a chair for her.

"Thank you; I shan't trouble you but a moment," she responded, as she sank into the proffered chair. "I hope you will not think me inquisitive," she added, "but something has happened to make it necessary for me to have a little advice, and so I have come to you, knowing of no one else to whom I can apply." She paused for a moment, while she swept back a disheveled lock of hair that fell upon her forehead.



A girl of not over eighteen.

"I feel honored, and shall be pleased if I can serve you in any way," assured Mark.

"The matter of which I wish to speak," she went on, "is one of great importance, but it is so strange—so obscured by mystery, that I am completely bewildered by it. I understand that you are a detective, and that is why I have come to you."

"I have done a little in that line," confessed Mark, "but only in a sort of amateur way. However, I shall be glad to do whatever I can for you, and shall feel honored by your confidence."

"You are acquainted with Mr. Hartman, the station agent?" she asked.

"I have known him only a few days."

"As I was passing thru the office a half-hour ago," she went on, "I came suddenly upon him and Mr. Quick. They were standing just inside the door, and as I entered I saw him hand a small ebony box to Mr. Quick. The box was open, and quite unintentionally I caught a view of the contents, which was a beautiful diamond necklace. As I passed on I heard him ask Mr. Quick to put it in the safe. But I was too amazed and bewildered to think of anything just then, for, Mr. Sheldon, the diamond necklace which I saw in the little ebony box is mine—a gift from my father—and it was stolen two years ago!"

CHAPTER IX.

MARK SHELDON listened to the startling announcement made by Katharine Turk with a sense of dazed bewilderment. Then a jumble of strange conjectures flashed thru his mind, and in the confusion of it all he was like one groping his way in the darkness. Katharine Turk was the owner of the diamond necklace now lying in the landlord's safe! And the necklace had been found in the murdered man's room!

Even while she was speaking these thoughts flashed thru his brain, and with them came the remembrance of the ring with the broken hearts. And one-half of that, too, had been found in Smoot's room!

"Probably you can tell me how the necklace came into the hands of Mr. Hartman, and at the same time advise me as to what I shall do to establish my right to possess it," went on the girl, in a low voice. "When I saw the necklace in Mr. Quick's hand, I was so filled with amazement that it would have been quite impossible for me to speak about it. In fact, I could scarcely believe the evidence of my senses. But after I had time to think it over, and to recall to my mind the fact that I had, in the brief glance I had given the necklace, seen the dragon's claw clasp of Roman gold and the familiar diamond settings, I came to the full realization that it was truly mine, tho it seemed so strangely improbable that it should have been brought here and to have fallen under my eyes in the way it did. So I have run out here for a moment to tell you about it and ask you to look into the matter for me." She had risen as she spoke, and now added: "I shall see you again tomorrow, and then I will furnish you any further information you may require."

"You may rest assured that I will probe the matter to the very bottom," said Mark, "and shall be glad to talk with you further on the subject whenever it suits your convenience."

"Oh, I thank you," she murmured. "I will see you tomorrow. Good night, Mr. Sheldon."

Mark stood gazing after her as she glided thru the door, and he noticed how the glow of the lamp in the hall touched her hair with little flecks of yellow gold, and with what grace the supple form moved along the glowing wall and vanished, leaving his thoughts to revert to the words she had just uttered, words that had brought another mystery into the strange affair at Barclay House.

He stood for some time absorbed in deep thought, and then he went down to have a talk with the landlord, who invited him to come into his private office.

"I was just wanting to see you," he said. "I suppose Hartman told you about the necklace?"

"Yes," replied Mark.

"You saw the trinket?"

"Yes."

"Now, would you consider it to be genuine? You see, I know nothing about such things, and shouldn't know whether it was worth a thousand dollars or a dollar and a quarter."

"I examined it pretty closely," replied Mark, "and I should say that it was worth as much as twenty thousand dollars!"

"Good gracious!" cried Quick. "Hartman intimated the same to me, but I thought he must be mistaken. By thunder! That is quite a fortune!"

"Yes, it is a costly trinket."

"And to think it was found in Smoot's room, stuck in a little flower-pot!" cried Quick, "and by gum! it might have remained there for a year if Hartman hadn't run onto it. Do you really think that it can be the necklace mentioned in the newspaper clipping Hartman has?"

"That is yet to be found out. I was quite positive that it was when Hartman related all the circumstances connected with his finding it, but now it looks as if it were the property of one of your guests."

"You don't say so? Whom do you mean?"

"Miss Turk," replied Mark.

"[illegible] gracious! Did she tell you so?"

"Yes; for, as you [illegible], she got a glimpse of it as she was passing thru the office when you had it in your hand, just before putting it in the safe."

"That's strange. But how did it come to be in Smoot's room?"

"That is just what she doesn't know,

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and what we shall try to find out. It was stolen from her two years ago, she says, and she was just as much surprised at seeing it here as we have been to discover that it is hers."

"Well, that beats me! What is to be done about it?"

"All she asked is to have time to establish her claim that the necklace is hers."

"She shall have that," nodded Quick. "If Miss Turk says the trinket is hers, it is hers; I have no doubt about that. But, Mr. Sheldon, I don't particularly like the idea of keeping the thing here when we know that there are a couple of gents at large who might crack the place at any time, if they got wind of its being here. I mean the men Hartman told about, one of whom has already been here rummaging around in the role of a detective."

"I understand," answered Mark. "I hardly think there is any danger from that source, but if there should be," he added, with a smile, "you might put the necklace back in the flower-pot. No one seemed to be able to find it while it was there, excepting Hartman, and he won't tell them."

The landlord laughed. "That's the truth," he said. "This Smoot case is getting mixed up so that I can hardly tell what to think. I'm sorry it happened in Barclay House. I wish people who want to do killing would not come here to perform their work. It hurts a hotel, as I have had reasons to know. You can tell Miss Turk that the trinket will not be turned over to any one else till she is satisfied about it. In the meantime, Mr. Sheldon, I wish you would try to get to the bottom of all this business, for the sooner it is all cleared up the better for your interests and mine."

When Sheldon retired he lay for a long time thinking of the new developments in the strange case, and when at last he fell asleep it was to dream of a pair of deep blue eyes and a head of golden hair and a low voice speaking to him thru the gathering dusk.

CHAPTER X.

AFTER an early breakfast Mark Sheldon left the hotel for a tramp among the hills, with the possibility of paying a visit to the Black Hollow mine and getting a glimpse of the mysterious trio who were supposed to be there.

It was a beautiful morning, with a sky of transparent blue bending above the billowy landscape all aflame with the rich tints of October.

The smell of the sassafras on the hills and the breath of the crimson-berried spicewood down by the purring streams, came to him on the winelike air that flowed from the south; and the sound of the yellow-hammer and the blue jay echoed thru the jack-oaks farther up the slope.

It was a perfect day, and to the casual observer there would have been no sign of any break in the day's serene perfection. But along the western horizon, and extending far above, there ran a train of mistlike clouds, thin as vapor and as airy as the finest lace, but moving with that swiftness that is indicative of rapidly approaching change.

As Mark crossed the hill and descended into the valley beyond, he saw the slouching figure of a man come from a clump of scrub-oaks. He carried a fowling-piece, and as he approached Mark recognized him as Zeke Taggart, a man who had been employed to work in the grounds at Barclay House.

"How do ye do, Mr. Sheldon," greeted Taggart, as he came up. "It's a fine morning," He stopped, let the butt of his gun drop to the ground, while he leaned against a jack-oak. "I was jist thinkin' of havin' a word with you," he went on, "'lowin' as mebby you might like to know, as ye're the owner uv Barclay House?"

"Glad to hear what you have to say," said Mark, seating himself on a bowlder.

"It's like this," went on Taggart, pausing to fill and light his clay pipe: "I have bin doin' some work about the place, an' as Mr. Quick has bin good to me, I nachurally feel like doin' him a good turn as well as yerself, Mr. Sheldon. I reckon that the killin' in the house has upset ye all some?"

"Well, it isn't a very pleasant affair," answered Mark.

"No, indeed. You hain't found out who did the deed yit, I reckon?"

"No."

"Of course ye're interested in tryin' to git at the truth uv it," went on Taggart, "an' I was jist thinkin' that if I could give any p'inters it would help ye."

"To be sure," nodded Mark, wondering what new developments in the case Zeke had to offer.

"Ye see, it's like this," [illegible] "It ain't allus [illegible] uv lawin', an' mebby not then. That's why I hain't sed a word about what I seed. I ain't jist shore that I ort ter do so now, fer I knowed a feller over in Barry County that come perty near gittin' his head thru a noose by tellin' what he'd seen; fer they pounced on him, not bein' able ter find the right man. Mebby what I seed don't amount ter shucks, an' then mebby it does. But if I'm goin' ter git inter any trouble over it, I'd ruther hold my mouth shet."

"You need have no fear of telling what you know," assured Mark. "If you know anything that is likely to throw any light on the case, it is your duty to make it known."

"That's what I was thinkin', but I don't like the idee uv bein' a witness, an' I didn't say a word about it when the coroner was holdin' the inquest. But after thinkin' it over, I have decided ter tell jist what I seed. I was down at Dogwood the evenin' this yere Smoot come, an' I seed him on the station platform, an' talked with him a little while he was waitin' fer the hack ter come down from the hotel. I had bin waitin' fer a jug I expected ter come by express, an' when I got the jug I went over ter Seth Corbet's cabin an' we had a drink from the jug—fer I don't mind tellin' that the jug had licker in it. Seth was alone, an' so I spent the evenin' with him. In fact, it was about midnight when I started fer home. I came right up by the Barclay House, an' in order ter take a short cut, I jist took a bee line right thru the hotel grounds.

"The moon was up an' shinin' almost bright as day, an' as I was passin' I thought I seed some one walkin' toward the outside stairs. I couldn't make out what it was, as it was in the shadder of the house; but when I got closer an' passed the other side of the house, I seed a man an' a woman crossin' the verandy. I didn't think anything about it, only 'lowin' whoever they was they was up pretty late. The man turned as I passed, an' I got a good view uv his face. It was Smoot—the man I had seen at the station.

"That's all thar is ter tell. I didn't know the woman, fer ter tell the truth, I didn't see her face."

"Could you describe the woman, as to her size, her dress, or general appearance?" asked Mark.

"I hardly know. I barely looked at her."

"Was she tall, short, or slender?"

"Jist about the ordinary size, I should say."

"How was she dressed?"

"I can't say, only that I have an impression that she wore a long coat."

"What color?"

"A sort of gray, I think, but as it was night I couldn't tell fer certain."

"What did she have on her head?"

Zeke reflected for a moment, "I was tryin' ter think," he said. "It was some sort uv a shawl or scarf, now that I come to remember. Yes, that's what it was."

"What color?"

"It was either a blue or a white, I couldn't say which if I had ter hang."

"And you are sure the man with her was Basil Smoot?"

"Why, yes, jist about as shore as I am uv anything."

"Did either of them speak?"

"Not a word that I could hear."

"You didn't see any one else astir about the premises?"

"No, not a soul."

"Did you notice if there were any lights in the hotel?"

"Yes, I saw a light."

"Where was it?"

"In the office."

"Could you see into the office?"

"Yes."

"You saw no one there?"

"Not a soul. The light was low, like one leaves a lamp burn sometimes of nights."

"You didn't see any other lights in the hotel?"

"Not then. But as I was leavin' the grounds I happened ter glance back, an' saw one from a winder in the upper story."

"Was it near where you had seen the man and woman?"

"I think it was, but I won't be positive. Ye see, thar's a good many trees in the grounds, an' I didn't have a very good view uv the hotel."

"Did you meet or see any one else on your way home?"

"Not a soul."

"Did you tell anybody [illegible] told me?" [illegible] sed I'd better not [illegible] it, as it might git me inter trouble. I guess she was thinkin' of me havin' that jug."

"You had the jug of liquor with you?"

"Yes."

"Had you been drinking much?"

"No; I ain't that sort uv a drinker," denied Zeke, with an energetic nod of the head.

"It was a gallon jug?"

"Yes."

"How long does a gallon of liquor last you?"

"About three months. I calculated that this would do me till Christmas."

"Did you see Smoot after he was killed?" Mark asked.

"Yes, when the inquest was bein' held."

"You recognized the body as that of the man you saw at the station, and afterward on the veranda at Barclay House?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

"Well, Mr. Taggart," said Mark, after a moment's reflection, "I thank you very much for telling me all this. It may help us to get at the truth of the dreadful affair. I shall probably want to see you again. Do you live near here?"

"Jist across the hill yon'," replied Taggart, flinging his hand toward the south. "I'm down at the hotel frequently, doin' odd jobs about the grounds, an' you can see me any time."

After a few minutes' further conversation with Zeke Taggart, Mark continued his walk across the hills, his mind occupied with the story Zeke had just told.

The fact that Basil Smoot had been seen on the veranda of the hotel at midnight refuted the theory that he had retired upon going to his room. And that there was a woman with him on the veranda at that time of night was a startling development in the case.

Who was the woman? Could she have been some one who was staying at the hotel? What were the pair doing out on the veranda at that time of night? These thoughts ran thru Mark's mind in a bewildering maze. There was a woman in the case! It had worked up

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to that at last. Who was the woman? The thought dazed Mark and brought back to his mind a ring with the broken hearts and a diamond necklace. These had been found in the murdered man's room! And then there came before his mental vision the face of a woman—the face of Katharine Turk!

CHAPTER XI.

THE telegram which Mark had written to the chief of police of Chicago regarding the probable recovery of the diamond necklace was promptly put on the wire by Hartman an hour after he left the hotel. The next morning at about eight o'clock an answer came, bearing this information:

> "Have seen Mrs. P. She will send representative to identify property at once. Congratulations."

J. Frank Hartman was flushed with joy, not only on account of the prospect of winning a large reward, but at the success he had made with the first real case he had ever undertaken. He called up Barclay House at once and asked for Mark Sheldon, that he might give him the telegram over the 'phone, but was told that Mark was not at the hotel, and had gone for a walk.

He called his cub operator in. "Son, can you hold this job down today for me?"

"Sure, Moik," smiled the youth. "Just give me the chance."

"It's yours," replied Hartman. "I've got a little business on hand today, and maybe it won't keep. I'll do a little hunting, too." He took the telegram that had come for Mark Sheldon and went up to Barclay House. Mark had not returned.

"Well, I'll see him as I come back," he said to Quick. "I'm going for a little stroll across the ridge myself. Here's a telegram for him when he comes. Tell him I'll see him as I come back if I don't see him in my tramp across the hills."

He slung his gun across his shoulder and started for the hills lying to the west.

Just before he had left the hotel the night before, Mark Sheldon had told him of his visit to the Oaks, and of his meeting with Zeb Kaylor, who had told him of the mysterious trio—the man and the two women—who had stopped [illegible] to the Black Hollow subsequently gone their quarters there in the deserted house. And it was in the direction of the old mine in Black Hollow that Hartman turned his steps.

"I'm going to have a look at the mysterious Mr. Dennis Berkley and his companions," he mused, "and maybe I can pick up another thread in the tangled skein at Barclay House."

A mile from the hotel, just as he was ascending a little hill, he came upon Mark Sheldon, sitting composedly on a projecting ledge of rock eating persimmons.

"Come and join me," Mark invited. "This is fruit for the gods. I have just been talking to Zeke Taggart, the fellow who works about the grounds at Barclay House, and his little story has got things in such a twist that I felt the need of some mental stimulant. Get any word from the chief yet?"

"I left the telegram at the hotel, not knowing I would see you. He says he has seen Mrs. Pemberton and that she will send a representative to identify the property at once, and adds congratulations."

"That's good, only the congratulations will have to be transferred to you," smiled Mark. "But take a seat on the rock there and help yourself to the persimmons. You'll need something to strengthen your guessing machinery when I get thru with my story. The first installment will startle you. There is another claimant for the diamond necklace!"

"The deuce! Who is it?"

"Miss Katharine Turk!" announced Mark.

"Good heavens!" cried Hartman. "That is surely some surprise! Did she tell you it was hers?"

"Yes; for you will probably remember that she passed by when you and Mr. Quick were talking about the necklace, and she saw it in Mr. Quick's hand just before he put it in the safe."

"I remember her passing as we were talking about it," nodded Hartman, a dazed look in his eyes. "But she could have had but an imperfect view of it, and is probably mistaken. But what on earth, if it were hers, was it doing in Basil Smoot's room? When did she lose it? And under what circumstances? When she answers these questions and explains why the necklace is being claimed by a Mrs. Pemberton of Chicago, and how it happened that, in support of Mrs. Pemberton's claim, two crooks followed Smoot from the city where the diamond necklace was stolen from her, for the purpose of getting hold of it. Did Miss Turk give you any information that would throw any light on all this queer business?"

"No, she didn't. I had but a brief talk with her. She came to me on the veranda shortly after you left, and told me that she had seen the necklace, and had recognized it as one she had lost two years ago—that is, it was stolen from her."

"That was all she told you?"

"Yes; but I am to see her today, and then she will make a full explanation. She seemed to have known that I have been doing detective work, and asked me to investigate the matter for her. She seems to believe she can establish her claim that the necklace is hers."

"Of course, Miss Turk, I should judge from what I have seen of her, would not claim the necklace unless she believed it was hers," said Hartman. "That is just what puzzles me. A necklace worth twenty thousand dollars must necessarily have a history which can be easily traced, and must have marks by which it can be identified."

"Exactly. There will be little trouble in deciding the ownership, I imagine, when all the proofs are presented."

"Did you tell her how the necklace came into my possession?"

"She did not wait to ask for any particulars. She merely stated that she had seen the necklace by the merest chance, and had recognized it as her property, which was stolen two years ago. She made no inquiries as to how it had come into your possession, and asked me to act in her behalf regarding it."

"Oh, well, there is no cause to worry over it. All the interest I have in it is to see that it is restored to the rightful owner. We'll not cross a fence till we get to it. Meantime, I have taken a day off and am running over to Black Hollow to take a peep at the mysterious trio over there. You haven't been over?"

"No, but I had about halfway planned to go today. As you are going, that will save me the trouble, and instead I'll drop around and see Zeb Kaylor at the Oaks and have a game of chess. But by the way, I have something to [illegible]thing that has a direct [illegible]"

"What is it? [illegible]" said Hartman.

"You know Zeke Taggart?" asked Mark.

"Yes."

"Well, he is the man who gave me the information," and Mark told Taggart's story just as it had been told to him. "He hadn't said anything about it," Mark added, "because he was afraid he might get into trouble. So what we want to do now is to look out for a woman of medium size, wearing a long gray coat, and a blue or white scarf. I'll hike on now and see you when you come back."

Mark Sheldon rose from his seat and walked northward, while Hartman swung on his way toward Black Hollow, which lay to the west.

A half-mile farther on, Hartman was descending into a deep ravine, when he saw something that caused him to stop and wonder if he were really awake, or asleep and dreaming!

Straight before him, not twenty yards away, was a little clump of persimmon trees, laden with the amber fruit on which the first frost had fallen, leaving and fixing on the golden films the color from autumn's flimsy veil of transparent blue. But it was not the golden fruit that invited and riveted the attention of the station agent, for perched, sylphlike, among the branches, her flexuous figure swaying with the bending trees, was a girl of not over 18. She was dressed in well-fitting suit of light tan, with shoes to match, but her head, which was graced by a profusion of dark brown hair, was innocent of any covering. Her face, which could only be seen in profile, was of witching loveliness in its dark beauty. It was evident that the girl had not discovered the approach of the intruder. Unmindful of the admiring eyes fixed upon her, she abandoned herself to the pleasure of devouring the golden fruit, all the while rocking back and forth with the swaying tree, in unison with little snatches of a song she was humming.

J. Frank Hartman did not venture to move or speak lest the vision should melt into the blue mist that lay over the hills and valleys. He stood drinking in the music—the broken refrain of

(Continued on Page 23.)

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CHAPTER XXVI.

SHE had been arranging the papers deftly in some sort of order.

"You read French, I think? The letter of Ferdinand is in that language; Sir Mortimer's notes and answers are of course in English."

I drew toward me the first of the papers she indicated.

"You are nothing if not modern in your methods," I scoffed, glancing down the page. "Your safes and typewriters bring back to me the associations of my banking business. And a banker, let me warn you, scans the signature of a draft carefully before he cashes it."

"The typewriter is an amusing little instrument," she yawned, "and I am proud of my success in mastering it. As for the safe, if you have been a banker, you know that the combination is carefully guarded, M. Coward."

It gave her the cruelest delight to taunt me with that shameful word. During the next half-hour she insulted me so at least half a dozen times. I bent my attention on the paper before me. I translate roughly Ferdinand's letter:

"(Strictly confidential.)
"Hotel Du Rhin,
"Place Vendome, Paris.
"May 23d.

"My Dear Sir Mortimer:

"I expect to start for Sofia via Vienna and Budapest in about a week; I trust I shall see you at the Palace shortly after my arrival. Meanwhile let me urge on you once more that you exert without further delay your great influence with your Foreign Office, that your ministers may be convinced that the crisis has [illegible]

[illegible] I must lead my army to the succor of the distressed people of Macedonia. I think that the profound knowledge you have always shown of affairs in the Balkan Peninsula must make you realize the truth of this statement. It is useless for me to repeat my arguments. For what you have done I thank you. But it is not to the diplomatist I am now speaking, but to the man. I have written this letter with my own hand, for reasons that you will understand.

"Believe me, my dear Sir Mortimer,
"Faithfully yours,
"FERDINAND."

"I see nothing incriminating in this letter," I said, "nor anything out of the usual run of letters."

"You will notice on the back of the letter this brief statement: 'Answered, June 3rd, M. B.' As to the answer of the letter it is equally innocent. It is simply the guarded reply of a diplomatist dealing with a delicate topic. In these typewritten copies this letter and its answer are meaningless. The originals are simply useful to prove the authenticity of Sir Mortimer's handwriting."

I scanned the answer. It was not an exact copy, but the substance of Sir Mortimer's letter jotted down to refresh his memory:

"I replied in substance as follows: It was useless to bring up the matter again; my personal wishes would not be sufficient to change the program of the Foreign Office; at present I did not see my way clear to advocate as a diplomatist England's espousal of this cause; I would continue to lay the matter before the Foreign Office; more than that, when events justified the act, I would see that such influence as I possessed was exerted in the manner Prince Ferdinand wished; but at present I could offer no encouragement."

(Note concerning the above, also in Sir Mortimer's handwriting.)

"This firm reply will put an end, I think, to further correspondence in that quarter. Certainly, the hopes of the nation seem so radically divergent from those of the ruler that I can favor one only at the expense of the other. Naturally, I prefer to favor the party that promises the most for my own interests."

"I told you that the originals are particularly useful to identify the handwriting and signature of Sir Mortimer. But observe, monsieur, the expression: 'Naturally, I prefer to favor the party that promises the most for my own interests.' That sentence is to be remembered when you read the other letters. It has its significance."

Again she stretched out her hand to receive the papers I had read. I did not relinquish [illegible]

[illegible] grimly. The expression [illegible] enough to me; on the face of it it would mean simply that Sir Mortimer's interests were identical with the interests of England."

"We shall see," she returned with confidence. "The papers of the second envelope, which I have called Documents B, are all in English. The writer was evidently an educated Bulgar of the official class; many of this class are trained at Roberts College, and speak and write English fluently."

"Sofia, Headquarters of the Society of Freedom.

"To His Excellency Sir Mortimer Brett, Minister Plenipotentiary and Consul General of His Britannic Majesty at the Court of Sofia:

"Sir: We of the Society of Freedom wait patiently and anxiously for your excellency's answer to our humble petition. We trust your excellency does not ignore this petition because the signatures of the petitioners are not added thereto. Surely your excellency understands that the dictates of prudence make it inevitable that it is sent to you anonymously.

"Your excellency must be familiar with our grievances. Our present ruler cannot and will not be longer tolerated by his subjects. We fear the British Foreign Office, however, does not realize the extent of Prince Ferdinand's unpopularity. Even if your ministers care nothing for that, do they feel no concern that he is the tool of Russia?

"He has asked Russia repeatedly that he be recognized a King, and that he receive that title. His vanity is such that he would sacrifice the freedom of his people to be on equal terms with the sovereigns of Servia and Roumania.

"Once more, perhaps for the last time, we petition your excellency to exert the extraordinary influence your excellency possesses, that the English minister be advised in time. The government of Prince Ferdinand must fall. We do not desire bloodshed. There shall be none, we swear it, if England will support the insurgent party. But in any case Bulgaria must be free.

"We do not ask for the active aid of England. We beg that England shall not interfere with the ambitions of the people.

"Your excellency shall have no reason to regret being our friend. And there are other means of rewarding friendship besides empty words of gratitude. Let your excellency once assure us of your intention to support our cause, and we shall make this more clear.

"Your excellency knows the manner in which your answer may be conveyed to this society.

"With profound expressions of respect, we submit ourselves,

"THE COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIETY OF FREEDOM."

I placed this letter on my knee with the others I had read.

"This Society of Freedom, is it concerned with the trick of the death-mask stamp?"

"I fear so," she answered in a low voice.

"Then has the fact no significance for you that Dr. Starva received a letter with one of those stamps on the envelope last night? These stamps are proscribed. They could be sent thru the mail only because certain of the postal authorities were in sympathy with the revolutionaries. Letters with these stamps, it is safe to infer, would be sent only to those who are equally in sympathy. Dr. Starva must be favorable to this party, if he is not actually one of the committee. I warned you last night that there was treachery in the camp."

"If Dr. Starva has proved to be a traitor to the cause he will receive his punishment. The memorandum of Sir Mortimer's reply to the letter you have just read is pinned on the back of the sheet. Read it," she commanded harshly.

[illegible] I have fulfilled my diplomatic duties hitherto as a machine, that neither thinks nor feels. Now I find that I am human; that I am a man, with a man's weakness. I say I am tempted. I believe that lofty principles actuate Bulgaria. That, I say to myself, is my excuse. But lofty principles are not sufficient. I disguised my true feeling in answering this letter by vague objections. I confessed myself in sympathy with Bulgaria's cause; but I protested that more potent arguments must be used to convince me. The interests of England are my own; but if it could be done without too great a risk, I believe, God help me, I would further my own ambitions at her expense. I say I am tempted."

"I say I am tempted,"; "If it could be done without too great a risk, I believe, God help me, I would further my own ambitions at her expense"—such expressions were hideously significant. But I met calmly the malevolent triumph of Madame de Varnier.

"When you read the next letter," she said, watching me closely, "you will understand the meaning of the expression, 'There are other means of rewarding friendship besides empty words of gratitude.' Even so stanch an advocate of Sir Mortimer's honor as yourself must realize that in the words you have just read, he was endeavoring to discover just what that vague promise meant."

I received the next letter in silence.

"To His Excellency(etc.:

"Our answer to your excellency's kind letter wishes to make this fact clear: The people of Bulgaria pledge their word, thru this committee, that if England gives to the insurgent party its support in overthrowing the rule of

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Ferdinand, the relation of England to Bulgaria shall be similar to that which exists between Egypt and England.

"The Society of Freedom is fully aware that your excellency's inconvenience and labor must be recompensed. The sum of twenty thousand pounds is already placed in the Ottoman Bank payable to your excellency on demand."

(Note by Sir Mortimer pinned to the above letter.)

"To this I replied that the sum mentioned was too ludicrously small to be considered. Only the most substantial guarantee could justify me in taking the risks involved."

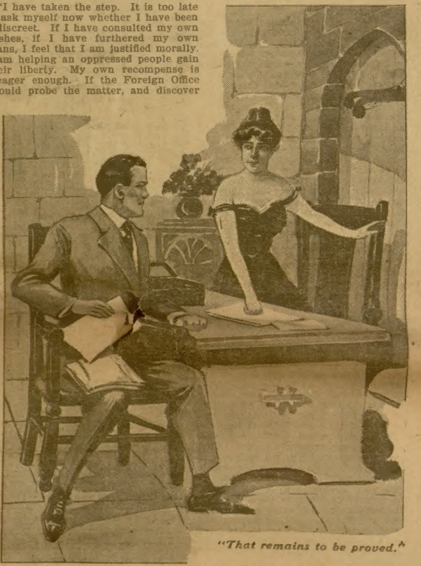
(Third letter to Sir Mortimer from the society.)

"To His Excellency, etc.:

"The sum of fifty thousand pounds has been placed in the Ottoman Bank to your excellency's account. The society trusts that this sum will be sufficient to justify the risks. Will your excellency give his answer without delay?"

(Note by Sir Mortimer pinned to the above letter.)

"I have taken the step. It is too late to ask myself now whether I have been indiscreet. If I have consulted my own wishes, if I have furthered my own plans, I feel that I am justified morally. I am helping an oppressed people gain their liberty. My own recompense is meager enough. If the Foreign Office should probe the matter, and discover the extent of my indiscretion, my diplomatic career will be ended. But I am content to do a little evil that good may come."



"That remains to be proved."

I crushed the paper in my hand, sick at heart. I shuddered at the hypocritical comfort this guilty man had hugged to his breast. I had hoped against hope. But if they were true copies, I could no longer doubt that Sir Mortimer had stooped to the taking of bribes.

"And these documents are word for word copies of those in the safe?" I demanded gloomily.

"I swear it by every oath I hold sacred!" she replied without hesitation, and kissed the jeweled cross that hung about her neck.

She stretched out her hand for the papers. I tore them to atoms before her eyes.

For a moment she struggled to rescue them from my grasp. When she saw that it was too late, she laughed boisterously—a laughter that showed at once contempt, defiance, and triumph.

"Bravo!" She clapped her hands derisively. "You take your precautions. You are desperate. Protest as you will, you are convinced of Sir Mortimer's guilt."

"You are mistaken," I replied coolly. "But even if these papers are true copies of genuine documents, it is as well that even the copies be destroyed. If they are forgeries, and you have yet to prove to me they are not, they are dangerous toys, and so better destroyed."

"Another copy is easily made, so long as I have the combination of my safe, M. Coward."

"You are never weary of insulting me," I said indifferently. "But be sure of this, you will find I am not coward enough to yield weakly to your scheme of blackmail."

"No; you are so brave that you leave a helpless girl to bear the disgrace of her dead brother, when by a word you might save her the suffering. Your pretended honor is so precious to you that you scorn to aid the woman whom you love."

"Silence, woman!" I cried passionately. "Do you think I am convinced of Sir Mortimer's guilt because of these flimsy typewritten copies? You must let me see the papers in the safe."

"If you are desperate enough to destroy a copy, I should scarcely trust you with the original. For the last time, must the woman you love know of her brother's disgrace? I am in your power; perhaps you hope that I shall be coaxed into opening the safe. Or are you about to compel me?"

"I should have resorted to that measure long ago had I thought it would prove effectual. It seems that there is again a deadlock between us. I refuse absolutely, not only to help you, but to believe that Sir Mortimer is guilty."

"If I show the papers in the safe to Helena Brett, even she must believe the evidence of her eyes. Shall I call her, and ask her if she recognizes her brother's handwriting? If you believe so strongly as you profess that Sir Mortimer was innocent of wrongdoing, you will not refuse that."

"I would spare her even the thought of its possibility," I said sternly. "That is impossible. She shall see those papers—if not today, tomorrow, the next day; it makes little difference to me."

"'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,'" I quoted flippantly; but I began to think it inevitable that Helena Brett be summoned.

"Again we must compromise, it appears. I will call Sir Mortimer's sister here. She shall see the papers—decide for herself and for you whether they are genuine. You see, I am strong enough to prevent a woman from destroying the originals as you have destroyed the copies."

"And when she has seen those papers?" I asked thoughtfully. "Say even that she herself believes them genuine? What then?"

"It will be for her to decide. Perhaps she will refuse to ask you to do what I wish. Perhaps she will offer to you happiness if you consent. She shall be the one to decide. You profess to believe that Sir Mortimer is innocent. More than that, you think her soul so white that she will refuse, even if she believes her brother guilty, to rescue his memory from dishonor with dishonor."

She had put into words my own thought.

"We will let her decide," I said quietly.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"AND am I again to shout my commands to my servant thru the closed door?" asked Madame de Varnier, ironically.

I unlocked the door of the staircase in silence, taking the precaution, however, of not admitting Alphonse.

"Has Miss Brett come to the chateau as I wished?" Madame de Varnier spoke naturally thru the half-opened door, not betraying my presence behind it.

"She is waiting in the music-room, madam."

"Bring her here."

"I shall do as madam wishes. But this American, this man we called his excellency—he surprised me just now—has he intruded on madam, or——"

"He came here to keep an appointment with me," Madame de Varnier replied composedly, cutting short his agitated whisper.

"Ah, that is well."

Alphonse sighed his relief, and departed on his errand.

"What inducement can you have offered that she should come boldly to this Castle of Despair?"

"Is not the inducement great that she is to see a loved brother?"

Madame de Varnier seated herself in the shadow, so that she would not at once confront Helena as she entered. Her jeweled fingers touched her hair lightly; her pose suggested the languid indifference of a woman of the world who awaits the entrance of a caller. Mercy and tenderness and womanly pity were denied this beautiful animal at her birth. Or these divine qualities had been fiercely crushed by fanatic zeal.

I paced to and fro in an agony of rage and pity; and this Medusa followed my every movement with her cruel, mocking smile.

The woman whom I had hoped to save from suffering, yes, the woman I loved, was coming to this chamber of horror. She was coming, radiant with hope. Happiness awaited her, she thought—the caresses of a loved brother, repentant of his momentary folly. And, perhaps, her heart was beating high with gratitude to me—to the man

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who she thought had made this much wished-for reconciliation possible.

Black despair awaited her in the little oratory yonder. She was to be tortured with a dilemma as cruel as ever racked the heart of woman.

But her decision I could not doubt. I had a proud faith in this lady who had sent me into the lists to fight for her. When first I had seen her on the terrace of the hotel at Lucerne—it seemed ages ago, instead of days—I remembered how her clear gaze had thrilled me. The calm, unwavering look of her gray eyes was truth itself, I had thought. A lie was not possible for her—not even a lie to be spoken by another for her sake.

But with what abhorrence would she regard me! Had I not been drawn in the subtile web of this Circe's net, the dilemma at least would not exist for her. But if the dilemma did not exist, Sir Mortimer's dishonor would still be a terrible reality. After all, the curtain had not fallen yet. Helena and I were both puppets in the hands of capricious Fortune. It was she who held the balances; or, rather a just God whose wheels may turn slowly, but sooner or later He sees that justice is done.

I had left the door slightly ajar. It was pushed open with a brusque suddenness that startled. The servant must have known the tragedy that awaited the woman he was conducting here. With a Frenchman's love of the dramatic, he ushered her in with pompous ceremony, and stood waiting expectantly. As I closed the door roughly on him, Helena saw me. Madame de Varnier, seated in the shadow, she had not yet seen.

I scanned her face closely. I saw that not hope nor the expectancy of a happy meeting with her brother was her dominant emotion. Eager she was, but it was the eagerness of anxiety, and not of hope. Her quiet assurance came from courage and self-control. Her brother had disappeared mysteriously; Captain Forbes had been the victim of a trick; she had put her faith in one who was almost a stranger to her; and now she had ventured to the chateau alone. Even a man might have hesitated.

But when I stood before her, I was touched to see how she leaned on me, who had twice failed her.

"My brother?" she whispered.

Once before she had wrung from me the bitter truth. Now, as then, a certain courage came from her presence. Her own [illegible] weakness and sub- [illegible] answered her simply, as I knew she would have me answer—the direct, stern truth:

"Your brother is dead, Miss Brett."

There followed a silence so intense that I could hear quite distinctly the river Aare beating against the chateau walls. With the curious irrelevance that comes so often in moments of tense anxiety I thought it strange that Captain Forbes had not given some sign of his presence in his prison during the past half-hour. Helena leaned toward me, frowning slightly as if in perplexity.

"Dead, did you say? Not dead!"

I repeated the words; unconsciously I spoke a little louder. The scene seemed unreal, theatric. Again the irrelevant thought intruded, how, when a boy, I used to wonder if all the things that had hitherto happened in my life—all my existence—were not one long dream; a dream from which I should awake presently, to find myself living a life utterly different.

"It seems, sir," she faltered, "that your mission is always to bring bad tidings. It was only the other day you told me that the man who loved me had died. Now it is to tell me that the brother I loved so much is dead."

She smiled pitifully, a curiously twisted smile that expressed her suffering more than any tears. No reproaches could have troubled me as did that pathetic smile. I turned abruptly to Madame de Varnier, whom she had not yet seen. My rage and pity overcame my reason. I might have appealed to a heathen idol sitting in grotesque majesty in its temple of gloom with as little effect.

"You are a woman. You must have a woman's heart; you must feel some tenderness for others in their grief. You have told me that your life has been one of suffering; then have mercy for this girl who is suffering. You will not torture her further. You will leave to her the only comfort that remains for her, the proud memory of a brother who served his country with honor."

"It is for you to do that, monsieur." She spoke with assumed indifference, fingering the cross that hung from her neck.

"Mr. Haddon," said Helena proudly, "you will make no appeal to Madame de Varnier to spare me from suffering. Where is my brother? I suppose that there is no one here who will deny me my right to see him?"

The two women faced each other.

"Death is sometimes not the worst calamity that may befall one, madam."

At these ominous words Helena turned to me with a gesture of pain. Her courage faltered, tho she fought for her control before the woman whom she hated so bitterly.

"Death is not the worst calamity?" She repeated the words slowly, as if seeking their hidden meaning. "Ah, this infamous woman, who dragged down my brother to disgrace when he lived, will not spare even his memory. She threatens to make his shame even more public than it is."

"Your champion has it in his power to prevent that," suggested Madame de Varnier, softly.

Helena turned on her with horror.

"It is incredible that you should make traffic of a man's love."

"To me the love of a man like Sir Mortimer Brett would have been a glory, not a disgrace," returned the adventuress, calmly. "But there was no love between Sir Mortimer Brett and myself in the sense you mean. Whatever feeling your brother had for me was controlled. Yes, and I tempted him. In that regard his honor is stainless."

Motionless, each looked into the other's eyes.

"And yet you said there is a calamity worse than death?" Helena questioned, torn pitifully between hope and fear.

"And I say it again. Dishonor is worse than death."

Helena turned to me, dazed and appealing, a trembling hand drawn slowly across her forehead.

"You are silent. What do those extraordinary words mean?"

I hesitated.

"It is said—this woman says—but it is false. Do not believe her," I cried desperately at length.

"He has not the courage to tell the truth," cried Madame de Varnier, walking slowly toward Helena, who shrank back. "Your brother is known to be guilty of taking bribes."

"You are right not to believe that, Mr. Haddon," she said scornfully, and sighed her relief.

"There are proofs to convince the most skeptical, even you," insisted her tormentor, with savage emphasis.

"What you say is impossible. Where is my brother, Mr. Haddon?"

I pointed silently to the oratory. Helena turned to go thither; but Madame de Varnier barred her entrance.

"Ah, you are afraid!" she cried, standing at the door of the oratory with extended arms. "You dare not face the truth. Listen, madam; the proofs of your brother's guilt are not imaginary. They exist in his own writing. Not one signature which may be forged; there are whole pages. You listen now; you will tremble before I have finished. At present there is no one who has seen these proofs except myself. But dare to doubt me, to ignore these proofs, and they shall be for the whole world to read. Do you hear? I say for the whole world; and Russia would give me any sum I chose to ask for those papers. Do you hate me so much, and scorn me so bitterly, that you prefer to see your brother's name held up as a byword for Europe's contempt? You disdain to think it possible that my charge be true. Then what have you to fear? There is no one who can more surely identify your brother's writing than yourself. Which will you choose? It is for you to say. Will you consent to see these papers now, or am I to sell them to the embassies of Russia or Austria?"

The two women measured each other in a long silence. I watched the duel from the open window where I stood. Madame de Varnier's threat was a terrible one. It was the fierce pleading of a desperate and unscrupulous adventuress striving frantically to move the lofty trust of a sister in a brother's rectitude and honor. I had faith in the courage and nobility of soul of Helena. I believed that she would face shame and unhappiness with calm resolution. But I could not wonder that Madame de Varnier's menace made her hesitate.

The slow seconds passed, and still they faced each other in silence. That long silence seemed to me ominous. I suffered with Helena in the anguish of her decision.

To yield would be to doubt. But if she refused to yield, to doubt. And if this woman spoke the truth, and made good her threat—— For herself she would endure everything rather than compromise with this betrayer of men's honor. But there was the mother to be thought of.

She had decided. She raised her hands slowly in a gesture that pathetically showed her submission. Madame de Varnier had conquered—so far.

"Do not think I doubt because I consent." She turned to where I stood. "But if this woman is sincere, and believes that these proofs exist, others will believe it, too. There is no forgery so clever that I should not detect it. My brother's handwriting was peculiar. His honor must not be questioned because of a clever trick. Come, I will see those papers."

Madame de Varnier glided across the bare room and struck the heavy door of the little chamber she had already pointed out to me as containing the safe. To my surprise the door had not been locked. It opened ponderously, and I saw the gleam of the safe. She stood at the doorway and beckoned to Helena.

"Come, madam, or are you afraid to trust yourself in the room alone with me?"

"Has Mr. Haddon already seen these papers that he is not to come?"

"Mr. Haddon has seen copies of the original papers in the safe," returned Madame de Varnier in triumph. "He was so convinced of your brother's guilt that he has destroyed these copies. You will not be surprised then if I refuse to trust him with the precious originals."

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NEW YORK, N. Y.—Most people foolishly seem to think they are going to get renewed health and strength from some stimulating medicine, secret nostrum or narcotic drug, said Dr. Sauer, a specialist of this city, when, as a matter of fact, real and true strength can only come from the food you eat. But people often fail to get the strength out of their food because they haven't enough iron in their blood to enable it to change food into living matter. From their weakened, nervous condition they know something is wrong, but they can't tell what, so they generally commence doctoring for stomach, liver or kidney trouble or symptoms of some other ailment caused by the lack of iron in the blood. This thing may go on for years, while the patient suffers untold agony. If you are not strong or well, you owe it to yourself to make the following test. See how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five grain tablets of ordinary nuxated iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see for yourself how much you have gained. I have seen dozens of nervous, rundown people who were ailing all the while, double and even triple their strength and endurance and entirely get rid of all symptoms of dyspepsia, liver and other troubles in from ten to fourteen days' time simply by taking iron in the proper form, and this after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without obtaining any benefit. But don't take the old forms of reduced iron, iron acetate or tincture of iron simply to save a few cents. You must take iron in a form that can be easily absorbed and assimilated like nuxated iron if you want it to do you any good, otherwise it may prove worse than useless. Many an athlete or prize fighter has won the day simply because he knew the secret of great strength and endurance and filled his blood with iron before he went into the affray, while many another has gone down to inglorious defeat simply for the lack of iron.

NOTE—Nuxated Iron recommended above by Dr. Sauer, is one of the newer organic iron compounds. Unlike the older inorganic iron products, it is easily assimilated, does not injure the teeth, make them black, nor upset the stomach; on the contrary, it is a most potent remedy, in nearly all forms of indigestion, as well as for nervous, run-down conditions. The Manufacturers have such great confidence in Nuxated Iron that they offer to forfeit $100.00 to any charitable institution if they cannot take any man or woman under 60 who lacks iron and increase their strength 200 per cent or over in four weeks' time provided they have no serious organic trouble. They also offer to refund your money if it does not at least double your strength and endurance in ten days' time. It is dispensed in this city by all good druggists.

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I attempted no expostulation. I knew the uselessness of that; and we had agreed that Helena was to decide for herself. I had faith enough in her not to doubt her ultimate decision.

"I will see these papers with you alone," said Helena quietly.

"And you will give me your word of honor that you will not follow the example of Mr. Haddon in attempting to destroy them?"

"My word of honor!" cried Helena with bitterness. "Would you believe that if you think my brother guilty of dishonor?"

"I should believe it," answered Madame de Varnier.

"Then I give it to you."

She walked to the room with a firm step, passing me where I stood.

"Be brave," I whispered. "Be on your guard. Refuse to believe that your brother is guilty, no matter what specious proofs this woman may show you. It is simply impossible that he be guilty."

"Why do you say that?" Her eyes were very wistful.

"Because," I looked at her steadily, "I know how impossible it would be for the sister."

"Your faith strengthens mine." She entered the room, passing by Madame de Varnier at the threshold.

"Au revoir, M. Coward!" the woman cried tauntingly, and the key turned in the door.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

I HEARD a clock in the village strike the hour. It was six. The chateau walls cast a long shadow on the opposite bank of the river. The mountains in the far distance were purple and red in the evening light. The long day was coming swiftly to an end; and the night was mysterious with its promise of despair.

This tower of the three rooms! Two of these rooms held their tragedies. What if the third room had its tragedy likewise!

I struck sharply the door of that room in which Madame de Varnier had said that Captain Forbes was imprisoned. I listened; there was no answer. I called the name of the king's messenger aloud; still there was no answer. Soon the moon would rise, and its cold rays might fall on the lifeless body of Forbes; for if all were well, why should there be this ominous quiet?

The suspense was unendurable. I listened at the room of the door that concealed the two women. I heard the murmur of voices. That reassured me so far as Helena's safety was concerned; but it made me absolutely certain that Captain Forbes must have heard my voice if he were living, and in that room.

And when the two women came out? I shrank from that coming with dread. I had told Helena to be brave, to ignore the evidence of her own sight. But I had been shaken in my own belief as to Sir Mortimer's innocence. Surely her faith would be greater than mine; but the evidence seemed overwhelmingly against Sir Mortimer, if Sir Mortimer's letters and notes were genuine. At any rate, the woman I loved must hold a bitter cup to her blanched lips; it must be emptied to the very dregs. Her suffering was inevitable, whether she believed her brother innocent or guilty.

I could not doubt that she would refuse to purchase the silence of Madame de Varnier at the cost of further dishonor, even tho I were chiefly to bear that myself. But if she demanded that? Was I strong enough to resist her tears? I must be. My reason told me of the folly of Madame de Varnier's plan. But even if I yielded weakly presently, and the ruse actually succeeded, I knew that the hypocrisy of the act would become more and more dreadful to Helena with the coming years. No; if in the supreme ecstasy of her agony she should entreat me, I must still refuse. I must decide for her, even tho she thought my own cowardice responsible for that refusal.

Coward! How that word beat a devil's tattoo on my excited brain! It had been the keynote to all my suffering, and to all my joy. Willoughby had died uttering it; Helena had echoed it in thought; and Madame de Varnier had spoken it again and again in her fierce contempt during the past hour. Yes, it was the keynote of my suffering and my joy. It was the motif that obtruded again and again in the stormy music of these past hours. It was a baneful talisman, a watchword. Its letters seemed to have almost a magic potency. It was a countersign that opened for me the gates of paradise and hell.

A talisman! A watchword! A countersign! Suddenly I saw the word C-O-W-A-R-D written in flaming letters. They revolved furiously. They danced before my excited vision.

This was sheer madness—this impossible conjecture. I reasoned against the unreasoning impulse to hope against hope. But the forlorn, desperate possibility fought obstinately for recognition. It held me with all the damning power of a hallucination.

And then suddenly it became a conviction. It was no longer an impossible hope, not even an intuition. It became an absolute belief, a certainty. And this was the reason for my belief:

Whenever Madame de Varnier had mentioned the safe she had called me coward.

C-O-W-A-R-D!

That was the combination of the safe!

CHAPTER XXIX

AT LAST a door opened. Helena made her way toward me with uncertain steps, her hands held out before her, as one groping in the dark. Her splendid fearlessness was gone. She looked at me with the wild eyes of a wounded animal vainly seeking a way of escape. As she reached my side her hands were still held out as if for protection. I grasped them firmly, but I did not speak.

"It is true," she murmured. "It is true, and too horrible"

"Do not believe it," I said obstinately. "It is impossible."

"Can one deny a fact? Am I a child to be solaced with smooth words? I have seen; I must believe, tho God knows the truth makes me wish a hundred times that I lay beside my poor disgraced brother."

It is always painful to see one whom we respect the prey of an emotion uncontrolled. It was doubly painful for me to see this strong woman, whose dominant quality was courage and calm, writhe under the blow that deprived her for the moment of all power to think coherently. I dared not tell her my belief that I held the combination of the safe, and that before many minutes were passed I might have the papers in my possession.

The woman who tortured us both stood at the threshold of the little room Helena had just left, a malevolent figure in her hour of triumph. As I looked toward her, tempted to expel her bodily from that room and if my surmise was false, to force from her, even by physical violence if necessary, the combination of the safe, she withdrew hastily, leaving Helena and myself alone. It was then that I feared the worst. She had appealed to Helena. She was confident of her success.

Still I held Helena's hands tightly in mine. I wished to give back to her her poise, her calm courage.

"Mr. Haddon," she whispered presently, "do you think—is it possible—to do this thing?"

"It is possible; but it would be the act of a madman and a liar," I said gently.

"You say it is possible." She withdrew her hands almost roughly. Her voice was monotonous and harsh "Then you will save us, my mother and myself, from this deep disgrace."

"There is no service that I would not do for you, Miss Brett, that would bring you peace and happiness——"

"Peace! Happiness!" she interrupted with fierce remonstrance. "I do not look for peace or happiness—Honor itself—and the motto of the Bretts is 'Honor, My Sword'—can no longer be our proud boast. But if silence can be purchased it must be. I dare not let my brother's name be held in reproach. I dare not, I cannot, for his mother's sake, let it be known that he has been false to England."

"We may yet save him if——"

"Yes," she broke in with a strange exultancy that was even more dreadful to me than her despair, "and it is you

(Continued on Page 17.)

Rheumatism

Remarkable Home Cure Given by One Who Had It—He Wants Every Sufferer to Benefit.

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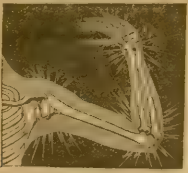
Years of awful suffering and misery have taught this man, Mark H Jackson of Syracuse, New York, how terrible an enemy to human happiness rheumatism is, and have given him sympathy with all unfortunates who are within its grasp. He wants every rheumatic victim to know how he was cured. Read what he says:



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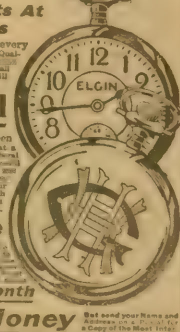

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An Exaggeration.

"I had a seventy-mile drive yesterday," she said, enthusiastically.

"There ain't no such thing," retorted the golf player, grimly

Exercise.

Visitor 'Do you give your dog any exercise?'

Owner Yes, he goes for a tramp every day

Equal Troubles.

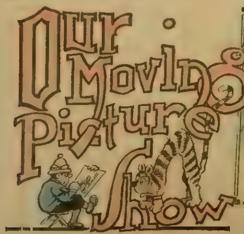
"Here I have an electric runabout on my hands"

"And I have a bad run-around on my finger."

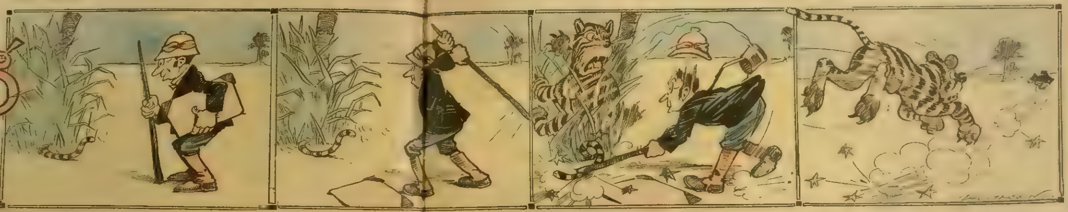
The Reason.

He "Mr Juggles is very much opposed to the single tax."

She—"Of course he is. Didn't you know he is a confirmed bachelor?"



THE PROFESSOR'S MISTAKE

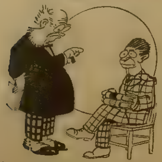


Professor—"Aha! Here's a beautiful specimen of the cross-barred serpent of Pharaoh!

"One good wallop on the bean and I'll have him added to my collection!

(Whack! Biff!) "Lord, it's a tiger!" (Wow!. Wouf! Arf! Arf!)

The Beast—"If that impudent guy couldn't run so fast I'd do a job of interior finishing—my interior and his finish!"



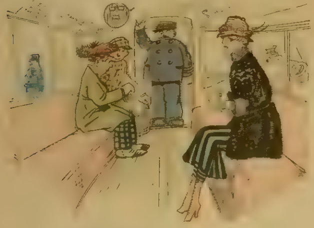
The Professor—"What is meant by neutrality?"

The Undergraduate—"Withholding your sympathy until you know which side is going to win."

Silenced.

Theodore Watts, says Charles Rowley in his book, "Fifty Years of Work Without Wages," tells a good story against himself. A nature enthusiast, he was climbing Snowdon and overtook an old gypsy woman He began to dilate upon the sublimity of the scenery in somewhat gushing phrases The woman paid no attention to him. Provoked by her irresponsiveness, he said, "You don't seem to care for this magnificent scenery?"

She took the pipe from her mouth and delivered this settler: "I enjies it; I don't jabb[illegible]



Sinclair "Yon's a bonny lass
McDougal [illegible]
Sinclair "D'ye ken her
McDougal "Aye
Sinclair "Then will ye no speak to her
McDougal 'A[illegible] After she's paid her far[illegible]

His Suggestion.

Possessed of very fine instincts, Mr. Right was much offended by an experience in a restaurant the other day. Sitting opposite him was a man who ate his feed in a vulgar way that offended the higher sensibilities of Right.

"Pray pardon me," he interposed. "May I be so bold as to offer a suggestion?"

"If you like," rudely answered the other, as he continued to maul a chicken bone.

"I should imagine," was the caustic rejoinder of Right, "that you would have considerably less trouble with that bone if you took it out on the mat!"

First Steps.

"Thump-rattlety-bang!" went the piano.

"What are you trying to play, Jane?" called out her father from the next room.

"It's an exercise from my new instruction book 'First Steps in Music'" she answered

"Well, I knew you were playing with your feet," he said, grimly "but don't step so heavily on the keys—it disturbs my thoughts

Pronounced Sane.

The learned members of a lunacy commission had just pronounced a patient sane

"Hut!" said the patient. "Of course I am sane! Last time I saw General Grant he gave me a ball of red yarn, and he said: 'Bill, if you can't make a steam boiler out of that yarn no man can'

Bill Was Very Thin.

In a certain small Ohio town lives a skin-and-bone man named, for convenience and to avoid libel, Bill Skinner During a large evening downtown, some one drew a gun and fired at random into a crowd of merrymakers. The bullet struck Bill Skinner in the thigh.

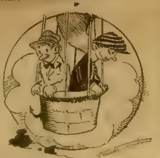
At once a deputation of citizens started on a run for the nearest and only doctor. It was long after midnight. They beat on the door and yelled, and finally a second-story window was raised and the doctor's head appeared.

"Hey! Doc! Come down," called one of the deputation "Bill Skinner's been shot."

"Howzat? Bill Skinner? Where is he shot?"

"In the leg"

"Well, well," said the doc, closing his window, "some shootin'"



"Why are you so sure the parachute will open?"

"Well, the man told me if it didn't open I could bring it back"

Not So Easy.

When the ball players are down South in the spring, the old boys do not take any chances with their pitching arms letting the youngsters prove their energies instead One day at Little Rock, where the Detroit team was playing an exhibition, old Red Donahue, who in his day was the sharpest-tongued man in baseball, was tossing them over and letting the Little Rock batters hit at will, to the great delight of the spectators

"Oh, Red, you're easy, easy, easy," shrieked one very wild fan who was getting on Red's nerves

"I'm not half as easy as you are," retorted Red, "you paid fifty cents to do it"

■

Embroidery Saved.

A young woman living in a village near Columbus became engaged recently to a young man The girl's name for the sake of this tale shall be Jones and that of the young man Jackson She called at the home of the young matron friend to break the news

"Oh, I am so happy!" said the young matron "And just to think your embroidery initials won't have to be changed"

His Direction.

A negro man came running down the lane as if a wild man were after him

"What are you running for, Mose?" called the colonel from the barn.

"I ain't a-runnin' fo'," shouted back Mose. "I'se a-runnin' from!"

Heard in Court.

Plaintiff's Lawyer 'I rest the case'

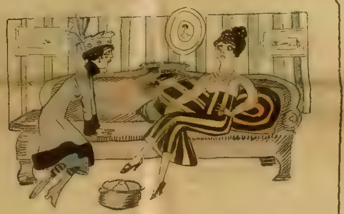
Defendant's Ditto—"You ought to; it's pretty weak

A Projecting Personality.

"Cap, we'll have to let this recruit go."

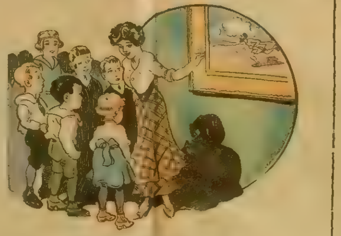
"Why?"

"He weighs 350 pounds, mostly bay window. If we put him in the front rank it kills the alignment. And if we stick him in the rear rank he's in the front rank, too"



Belle 'Do you believe that awful scandal about Bessie Van Ness?'

June "Every word of it! What is it? Tell me!'



The Teacher—"This is a picture of Cincinnatus, the Roman patriot, hurrying from his field, leaving his oxen yoked to the plow and standing in the furrow. Can any of you children tell me why he is going so hurriedly?"

One of the Children—"He must have heard the dinner horn blow."

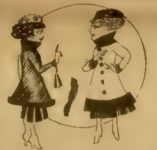
Startling Announcement.

One afternoon, just as a Providence clergyman was about to enter the pulpit to conduct the service, a couple from a nearby town presented themselves, making known their anxiety to be married as quickly as possible.

The clergyman, an extremely methodical man, replied that he could not oblige at that moment, but that immediately upon the conclusion of the services he would take pleasure in making them man and wife.

So, after some demurring, the couple seated themselves in the rear of the church. When the minister had finished his remarks he cleared his throat and made the following announcement:

"The parties who are to be joined in matrimony will present themselves at the chancel immediately after the singing of Hymn 425, 'Mistaken Souls That Dream of Heaven.'"



Ethel—"Are you and Dolly on speaking terms?"

Edith—"No, when we meet we only kiss—that is all!"

■

A Lesson Learned.

Hamilton Fish, Jr told a war story at a smoker at the officers' training camp in Plattsburg

"Two brothers, Russians," he said "were captured in the Carpathians and sent to a prison camp in Germany.

"Their mother heard nothing from them for a long while and the poor woman was nearly distracted Then at last, she got a letter a letter from the older brother Piotr

"'Dear mother,' he wrote, 'here I am in the lovely German prison camp. I have a beautiful room with use of bath The bed is comfortable, clean sheets every week. Good food and plenty of it Beer to drink and cigars to smoke I am very happy. Piotr

"'P. S.—Brother Ivan was shot this morning for complaining'"

So It Seems.

"Doing much advertising these days?"

"Not a great deal," answered the manufacturer of a household remedy "We are spending about $500,000 with the newspapers this year and perhaps $500,000 on billboards and other forms of outdoor advertising, but I can't say that we are exerting ourselves You see, our remedy sells itself

THE COMING GOWN.

Gone are the styles of yesteryear,
All eyes are looking to tomorrow,
To learn what fashions Nellie dear
Will buy or beg or steal or borrow;
Will the new gown be something swell?
Or will it fill the world with sorrow?
What will the coming fashion tell?
All eyes are looking to the morrow

Fair woman looks with shining eyes
Man looks intently as a mouser,
The coming fashion tops the rise—
Great heavens! Look! It is the trouser!
Lock all the lethal arms away,
And put a heavy chain on Towser
Bring back the styles of yesterday,
Tomorrow's gown is called the trouser!

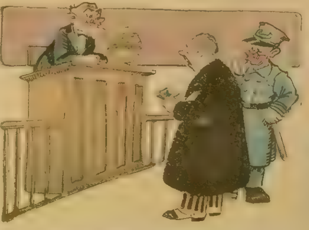
Ah, woman! We ne'er thought of that,
Nor dreamed of it, nor did we fear it;
Your peach basket and washtub hat
We stood for, nor did ever jeer it;
Your form is most divinely fair,
No fashion e'er designed can queer it.
But—please excuse this startled stare—
The trouser gown will now come near it.

Time was when man desired a wife,
And a wee cot in which to house her,
White frills and frou-frou brighten life—
What man can warm up to a trouser?
Oh, well, this, too, shall pass away,
But in the meantime chain up Towser,
You'll still be lovely, I dare say;
Go on, dear, jump into the trouser!

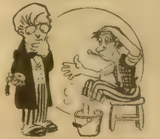
His Suits.

Sire—"I see in this expense account 'Fourteen suits, $1,000 You didn't pay that much for fourteen suits of clothes

Son "No: two of them were damage suits



Country Justice 'Ten dollars!'
Motorist I've only a 'twenty' Can you change it?
Justice "No but I can change the fine! I'll make it twenty!"



Patient—"Doctor, I feel awfully funny'

Doctor—"Write some funny stuff for the papers When it comes back you'll feel awfully serious'

Making Him Stop.

An Irish drill sergeant was instructing some recruits in the mysteries of marching movements, and found great difficulty in getting a [illegible] of his to halt when the command was given. After explaining [illegible] several times he [illegible] the recruit, sized him up [illegible] a couple of minutes, then demanded his name

'Fitzgerald, sor,' was the reply

'Did you ever drive a donkey [illegible]'

'Yes, sor

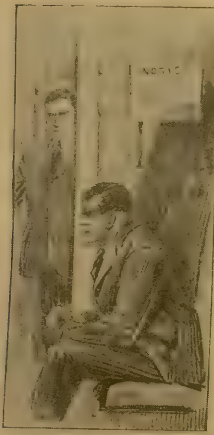
"What did you say when you wished him to stop?"

'Whoa'"

The sergeant turned away and immediately put his squad in motion After they had advanced a dozen yards or so he bawled out at the top of his lungs [illegible] ad, halt! Whoa, Fitzgerald!'

A Charming Menace

By Emma Howard



"I know that you have not lied."

CORRIGAN glanced up dully from his seat upon the low cot as Gregory Blair was ushered into his cell. He recognized the famous criminal lawyer from the pictures he had seen of him in the newspapers. Gregory Blair crossed the narrow cell and sat down on a low stool opposite Corrigan.

"Have you engaged a lawyer to defend you?" he asked.

Corrigan shook his head. He was a big, strong-looking fellow with a heavy, brutish face.

"Naw," he replied.

I have come to offer you my services," the other explained. "I am a lawyer and my name is Blair—Gregory Blair."

"I knowed who you was as soon as you come in," said Corrigan. "I knowed you from your pictures in the newspapers. You're the smartest lawyer in the country."

The suspicion of a smile touched Blair's fine-cut lips.

"If that is your opinion you should be willing to trust your case in my hands," he remarked.

Corrigan gave a short laugh.

"I am willing all right," he replied. "But I ain't got the price. I've a little money put by, but not enough to pay sich fees as you gits."

"I do not want you to pay me anything," said Gregory Blair, quietly. Corrigan stared. "I have a fancy to make the attempt to save you from the electric chair."

Corrigan moved uneasily. "If anybody can do it, it's you," he muttered.

"Then you will put your case in my hands?" queried the lawyer, with a suspicion of eagerness.

"Sure," replied Corrigan. "I prefers imprisonment for life to going to the electric chair." Again he gave a short, harsh laugh, but the big, knotted hand resting on the cot twitched nervously.

"I shall try for a verdict of life imprisonment," declared Blair. He paused a moment, then leaned a little toward the prisoner. "You claim that your only reason for killing your wife was that she did not love you. Now you must be perfectly frank with me. Is that the truth, or merely a subterfuge to conceal some other motive?" He observed Corrigan attentively.

"It's the truth," was the reply.

"She was not in love with some other man?"

Corrigan shook his head in quick denial.

"Mag? She was as straight a gal as ever walked," he replied. "I killed her jest because she wouldn't love me. There ain't nobody that'll believe me when I say it."

"I believe you," said Blair, quietly.

Corrigan drew a deep breath something like relief.

"I am d—d glad of it," he murmured. "It's the truth, and I can't say nothin' else."

"Were you aware that your wife did not love you when you married her?"

"Yes, I knowed it, but I didn't care then. I jest wanted her, that's all there was to it. I was mad arter her, and I didn't let her have no peace till she said she'd have me."

The lawyer smiled a little grimly.

"Do you think that was her only reason for marrying you?"

Corrigan reflected a moment.

"Well, Mag was sorter tired of workin' in the factory at starvation prices, and I was gittin' big pay in the machine shop," he at length admitted. "I had a nice home for her and I kept her like a lady," he continued. "For a while, arter we was married. I didn't care for nothin' nor think of nothin' but jest havin' got Mag." He paused, lapsing into gloomy thought.

"But you didn't continue feeling that way?" queried the lawyer.

"Naw," answered Corrigan, with a shake of the head. "'Twasn't so very long before I begun to feel sorter discontented-like. 'Stid of feelin' so lovin' like toward Mag, I felt bitter-like. Not that Mag wasn't all right," he hastened to explain. "There wasn't no fault to be found with her; she was a fine housekeeper, she wasn't extravagant, nor for runnin' 'round like some women—it was only that she didn't love me. Everybody said I was a lucky fellar for havin' sich a good wife, but I jest kept on gittin' more bad feelin' till I couldn't take no pleasure in nothin'. I was cross and crabbed with Mag. She must have seen that there was somethin' wrong with me, but she never said nothin'. I got to thinkin'," he went on gloomily, "that she'd ruther have me mean to her than lovin', and it seems like I came near to hatin' her. There were times when I hated her pretty looks, when I felt like I wouldn't have cared much if she'd got smallpox or somethin' and lost all her good looks." He paused with a deprecatory look at the lawyer.

The latter nodded comprehendingly. "I understand," he said.

"I didn't want no marble stater for a wife," continued Corrigan. "I wanted a flesh-and-blood woman. Mag's pretty face had tormented me powerful before I got her. I never thought to be tormented that way onct she was mine. The evenin' I done for her," his voice sank a little and he sat staring straight before him, "I come home from work and found her diked out in a new dress and lookin' her prettiest. My blood got hot soon as I seen her. She had a nice supper ready, and she talked and laughed gay and cheerful all the time we was eatin'. I didn't say much, but when we got up from the table I grabbed her fierce-like. She tried to git away from me. 'Don't be silly, Jim,' she said. I held her close, pushin' her head back and kissin' her rough. She stopped strugglin' and stood quiet, lettin' me have my way, but with no more feelin' to her than if she'd been a woman of stone. It seemed to set me crazy, and all of a sudden, I hated her like h—l. 'D—n you! D—n you!' I cried out, and then I had my hands about her throat. When I let go she fell all huddled up at my feet, and I knowed I'd killed her."

His voice trailed off into silence; his fixed gaze still clung to the blank wall opposite. The lawyer, who had been listening tensely, drew back with a long breath. There was a moment's silence. A slight shiver ran thru Corrigan's big body. He looked, with a sort of helpless appeal, at Gregory Blair.

"It's all true what I've told you, every word of it. I ain't lied about nothin'."

"I know that you have not lied, that it is all true," said Gregory Blair.

* * * * *

A woman remarked to the beautiful wife of Gregory Blair, "I would simply adore Mr. Blair if he were my husband."

"Would you?" murmured Mrs. Blair, without enthusiasm. "Why?"

"Because he is so clever and famous," was the reply.

"Is that the way you feel?" queried Mrs. Blair. "Now, I admire a man for his cleverness and his ability to win fame," she explained, "but those qualities do not appeal to me in the way that would cause me to love him."

The other woman looked a little amused at her frankness, tho it was a well-known fact that Mrs. Blair was not in love with her husband, and had married him because he was rich and growing richer every day. While she made no secret of her indifference, she did not permit herself the luxury of falling in love with some other man. No man's name had ever been mentioned in connection with hers; no breath of scandal ever touched her.

The visitor changed the subject, remarking: "I see that Mr. Blair is going to defend that wretch, Corrigan."

"Who is Corrigan?" queried Mrs. Blair.

"Corrigan is a mechanic who murdered his wife in a most brutal manner; choked her to death."

"Horrible!" murmured Mrs. Blair, a little abstractedly. She was not particularly interested.

"I am so sorry that Mr. Blair is going to defend the brute. He will probably save him from the electric chair."

"Why did he kill his wife?"

"He claims that he killed her because she did not love him."

"Really?" Mrs Blair looked somewhat interested. "How—unique!"

It's perfectly absurd, of course—a man's killing his wife because she doesn't love him."

"Oh, I don't know," murmured Mrs. Blair, reflectively.

"He probably killed her because she was unfaithful to him. An ignorant, brutish fellow like this Corrigan would strangle a woman for that in a minute. I wonder what Mr. Blair's plea will be."

"Perhaps the same as the prisoner," suggested Mrs. Blair.

"Oh, no, that would be absurd, of course. He will probably make it out that Corrigan was insane. Mr. Blair has gotten off quite a number of——" She paused, a little awkwardly.

MOST EMINENT MEDICAL AUTHORITIES ENDORSE IT.

A New Remedy for Kidney, Bladder and all Uric Acid Troubles.

Dr. Eberle and Dr. Braithwaite as well as Dr. Simon—all distinguished Authors—agree that whatever may be the disease, the urine seldom fails in furnishing us with a clue to the principles upon which it is to be treated, and accurate knowledge concerning the nature of disease can thus be obtained. If backache, scalding urine or frequent urination bother or distress you, or if uric acid in the blood has caused rheumatism, gout or sciatica or you suspect kidney or bladder trouble just write Dr. Pierce at the Surgical Institute, Buffalo, N. Y.; send a sample of urine and describe symptoms. You will receive free medical advice after Dr. Pierce's chemist has examined the urine—this will be carefully done without charge, and you will be under no obligation. Dr. Pierce during many years of experimentation has discovered a new remedy which is 37 times more powerful than lithia in removing uric acid from the system. If you are suffering from backache or the pains of rheumatism, go to your best store and ask for a 50-cent package of "Anuric" put up by Dr. Pierce. If he does not keep it, you can obtain a large trial package by sending 10 cents to Dr. Pierce, or 50 cents in stamps for full treatment. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription for weak women and Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery for the blood have been favorably known for the past forty years and more. They are standard remedies to-day—as well as Doctor Pierce's Pleasant Pellets for the liver and bowels. You can have a large trial package of any one of these remedies in Tablet form by writing Dr. Pierce and enclosing 10c.

MAKE $200.00 A MONTH

If you are making less than $50 a week you should write us to-day. We can help you to wealth and independence by our plan; you can work when you please, where you please, always have money and the means of making plenty more of it.

JUST LISTEN TO THIS.

W. L. Daniels, of Alabama, says
"I made on last Friday $39.75 with your machine. There is no better machine made at any price."
Chas. Smith, of W. Virginia, says
"Three hours and fifteen minutes I made $10.10."
Philip Pokorny, of Colorado, says.
"The first time I went out with your camera I made $7.75, the second time, I made $8.50 in the afternoons."

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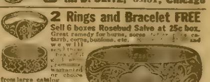

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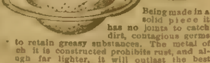

The Sanitary Aluminum Tea and Coffee Strainer

Being made in a solid piece it has no joints to catch dirt, contagious germs to retain greasy substances. The metal of which it is constructed prohibits rust, and although far lighter, it will outlast the best strainer.
cents. W. C. WATKINS, Parnassus, Pa.

"Criminals," supplemented Mrs. Blair with a smile. "If they were not criminals my husband would not be the famous man that he is."

* * *

The courtroom was crowded to the doors on the day set for the trial of James Corrigan for the murder of his wife. The case would have attracted very little attention but for the fact that the prisoner was to be defended by Gregory Blair. The general opinion was that Corrigan would escape the electric chair.

There was much conjecture as to the plea that would be entered by the defense. But to the astonishment of every one, Gregory Blair brought forward no plea. He simply based his defense on the assertion of the prisoner that he had killed his wife because she did not love him. He described in a manner that held the courtroom spellbound the murderous impulse that assailed and overmastered the prisoner to kill the woman he loved because of her [illegible]lness, her maddening unresponsive[illegible] His speech was eloquent, mas[illegible], amazing, but it was not convincing.

It gave the attorney for the commonwealth great opportunity for finished sarcasm as he derided the very idea of a man's killing his wife because he found her unresponsive. He scathed the prisoner, describing him as a brute, a monster, who had most brutally killed the woman who had been a faithful and exemplary wife, wantonly, perhaps, or for some reason that he hid beneath the most ridiculous and far-fetched plea. The attorney for the commonwealth had suffered defeat too often at the hands of Gregory Blair not to make the best of the opportunity afforded him. The jury promptly brought in a verdict of murder in the first degree, and James Corrigan was sentenced to death in the electric chair

The unusual had happened Gregory Blair had lost his case.

* * * * *

That night, upon her return from the opera, Mrs. Blair went into the library where her husband sat reading. He glanced up at her entrance, put aside his book, and arose. She came forward, loosening her wrap, which she dropped carelessly upon a chair, revealing herself in a decollete gown of white satin heavy with crystal embroidery.

"You lost your case?" she said, seating herself upon a couch.

"Yes, I lost it," Gregory Blair replied, a little mechanically, as he returned to his seat. The blood in his veins had quickened, for never had he found her beauty more potent and impelling. The heavy, clinging gown defined the long, lovely lines of her figure; her small, crimson mouth was like some tropic flower, her skin flawless, her heavily lidded eyes vividly blue.

"I read your speech," she continued. He looked at her attentively. She was evincing an interest in his defeat that she rarely manifested in his professional victories. "It was—wonderful."

He smiled grimly.

"It certainly failed of its purpose."

"That was because of the motive you attributed to Corrigan, was it not?"

"Undoubtedly," he replied.

"No one can understand your making such a mistake. Why did you?"

"In the overmastering egotism of my own comprehension, I lost sight completely of the possibility of such a plea appearing absurd, untenable, ridiculous, to others."

"You perfectly comprehended it?"

"Yes, that is why I tried to save Corrigan from the electric chair."

"You—mean——"

He studied her a moment before answering.

"I fancy you know," he said, at length.

Her eyes fell, she moved restlessly.

"Perhaps; I am not sure," she murmured.

"I will tell you why, in the first place, I offered my services to defend that poor wretch, Corrigan." She leaned forward, listening, her breath a little hurried. "It was because of a fellow-feeling I had for him—astonishing, perhaps, but true." He paused, studying her. Some emotion showed in her face, but he saw that it was not fear.

Her eyes fell, she sank back upon the couch.

"It is astonishing," she murmured. "No two men could be more unlike than you and Corrigan."

Blair shrugged his shoulders.

"Primitively, all men are alike," he said. "Education, culture, refinement, the influence of environment, social obligation are but a veneer beneath which there is the real man. There is the instinct of the brute in all men, wanting only the circumstances, the appeal, to call it forth. Corrigan would possibly be more apt to be overmastered by the brutal impulse that caused him to kill his wife than—I. But it behooves me, for the future, to be cautious."

"What will you do?" she asked.

He smiled. "To guard against an effect, one must avoid the cause. I shall avoid the cause."

"But what if I am not—afraid?"

She looked at him suddenly, and the amorous languor of her eyes thrilled him from head to foot. He started up, went and leaned over her.

"What do you mean?" he asked, hoarsely.

"You never appealed to me before," she murmured. "But—now!"

"Yes, now?" he queried.

She laughed softly, as she replied: "I like a touch of the brute in a man."

With a muttered exclamation that was half a groan, he stooped and swept her into his arms; her soft velvety mouth met and clung to his, he felt about his neck the softness and warmth of her bare arms

* * *

Mariar's Last Hour.

Mariar was going. For a week the housework had stood still, "because," as Mrs. Woodside said, "you can't ask a maid to do anything when she's leaving."

For a week the kitchen range had been cold, likewise the water tank beside it; and, there being no gas heater in the Woodside home, the grownups had contented themselves with cold baths and the children with such purification as could be accomplished with occasional bedtime teakettles of hot water. "I ought to have Mariar start the fire," said the mistress, "but it means bringing up coal from the cellar, and I'm afraid to ask her

The hour of Mariar's departure had arrived. She lazied thru the breakfast dishwashing, then disappeared up[illegible] to pack. Mrs. Woodside went into the deserted kitchen and said, "Now I'll have a fire and boilerful of hot water at last." She bro[illegible] ling and coal from the lower regio[illegible] she built the fire and stoked it f[illegible] hour, until the water tank gave out a grateful heat. Then she went to look for Mariar.

The outgoing maid was not in her room. Mrs. Woodside came down from the third floor perplexed Could Mariar have gone without saying good-by?

Then from behind the closed door of the bathroom came the joyous sounds of one luxuriating in a porcelain tub filled with glorious hot water Mariar was taking a bath

* * *

What He'd Like to Say.

Dear Sir—I am in re[illegible] letter of inquiry conce[illegible] Roe, who, in applying for a position as stenographer, has given you my name as a reference

Unhesitatingly I can recommend [illegible] Roe to any one who requires th[illegible]ices of a stenographer, but is n[illegible]t particular as to the neatness of correspondence sent out from the office. If it is true that the best of us make mistakes, I consider her then to be better than most of us. She can make herself at home in any office where there is a mirror and where punctuality is not compulsory. She has little knowledge of figures—other than her own.

I have it on her own authority that she is a perfect lady, descended from a genteel Southern family, and is working only pending the adjustment of her grandfather's estate. Probably it w[illegible] there, amid those refined surroundings that she learned to chew gum by the yard, vigorously and with audible sentences as "ain't got no right," "see them flowers," "Hadn't ought to of been," and others equally correct.

As a stenographer I unhesitatingly pronounce her an excellent judge of coiffure and clothes. As a worker she is an untiring conversationalist. As to dependability, I have never known her to leave the office without powdering her nose, or to permit a [illegible] male client to vis[illegible] without distracting his attention from [illegible] to her. She was in my employ t[illegible] weeks, the length of time it took me to get up courage enough to bring tears to her eyes by telling her her services were no longer required.

* * *

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Let Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets Assist Your Stomach Whenever It Needs Help. They Are Safe and Sure.

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The reason a Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablet is powerful enough to digest your next meal is because it is composed of those things which a weakened digestive system lacks.

If all the stomach sufferers who have been relieved of their misery by Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets could be gathered together into one column, they would make a tremendous and happy army. Join this army now by getting a 50c box from any druggist or by sending below coupon.

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F. A. Stuart Co., 204 Stuart Building, Marshall, Mich., send me at once a free trial package of Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets.

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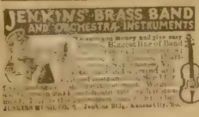
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Elegant Hunting, Guaranteed 20 yr. case $4.85 [illegible] Guaranteed American Movement [illegible]

Send No Money We take a [illegible]

[illegible] Watch Co. [illegible] 1010 W. [illegible] Chicago

1000 Shot Steel Air RIFLE
Hamilton 22 Cal. Hunting RIFLE
GIVEN Without Cost
BOYS!

We give [illegible] four Guns (on 4 Easy Plans) for selling our new "Heslene" [illegible] WE TRUST YOU [illegible] When sold, send us our $1 [illegible] your Gun, according to one of the four [illegible] you are entitled. [illegible] Extra Gift [illegible] order today

WAVERLY SUPPLY CO., Box [illegible], Mononga[illegible], Pa.

ACORN UNI-LITE FREE

[illegible] lamp. Weather proof [illegible] and around the farm. Write for big free offer. Special opportunity to farmers, stockmen and motorists. Agents make big money. Write tonight.

ACORN BRASS MFG. Co. [illegible] Acorn Bldg., Chicago

$4 Per Month Buys This Visible OLIVER TYPEWRITER

[illegible]

Typewriters Dist. Syndicate
1510 72R Wabash Avenue, Chicago

FRIENDSHIP LINK RING—ONLY 18c

Sterling Silver or Rolled Gold [illegible] or Plain Designs [illegible]

[illegible] JEWELRY CO. Dept. 152, New York

RHEUMATISM
STIFF JOINTS
SPRAINS
KILLS PAIN
SLOAN'S LINIMENT

Does Pain Interfere?

There is a remedy

Sloan's Liniment

Read this unsolicited grateful testimony—

Not long ago my left knee became lame and sore. It pained me many restless nights. So serious did it become that I was forced to consider giving up my work when I chanced to think of Sloan's Liniment. Let me say—less than one bottle fixed me up.
Chas. C. Campbell, Florence, Tex.

Classified Want Ads

Classified Want Ad Information

The rate for one insertion in Chicago Ledger and one insertion in The Saturday Blade is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size of ad or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500 N. Dearborn St. CHICAGO, ILL.

SALESMEN WANTED

TRAVELLING SALESMEN WANTED—EXperience unnecessary. Earn big pay while you learn at home during spare time. Only eight weeks' time required. Steady positions, easy work. Hundreds of good positions open. Write today for free book, "A Knight of the Grip" and testimonials from hundreds of students we have placed in positions paying $100 to $500 per month. Address Dept. B-37, National Salesmen Training Association, Chicago, New York, San Francisco.

WANTED HUSTLERS TO TAKE ORDERS for made-to-measure high [illegible] tailored suits from $9.50 to $2[illegible] [illegible] $25.00 to $50.00 weekly. Elegant [illegible] outfit free. Experience [illegible] pocket folder affair. Splendid opportunity to [illegible] Handy Dandy Line, Dept. E. [illegible] Chicago

$[illegible] PER WEEK AND EXPENSES TO [illegible] agents for us; send stamp [illegible]

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS. BEAT THIS—EASY $5. DAILY introducing Buena Herba Tablets, a compound of nature's roots and herbs, unequaled for liver, kidney, stomach troubles and impure blood; well advertised; immense seller; big repeater, exclusive territory; free goods, act quick. Columbia Chemical Company, 727A Woodward Building, Washington, D. C.

BIG TEXTILE MILLS WANT AMBITIOUS men and women everywhere to show latest dress fabrics, neckwear, hosiery and underwear. 400 styles. Easy sales. Values beat stores. Many making over $30.00 weekly. All or spare time. Complete sample outfit starts you. Steadfast Mills, 18 Remsen St., Cohoes, N. Y.

AMAZING, STARTLING, SENSATIONAL, stupendous, new, guaranteed, easy insurance protection plan. Hustling agent 18 to 60 wanted in each locality to represent big sick and accident company. W. G. Critchlow, Dept. 2717, Covington, Ky.

WILL $120 A MONTH AND AUTOMOBILE furnished free interest you? Answer quick. Secure valuable agency. Auto necessities. Guaranteed fast sellers. Quick repeaters. Remarkable money makers. T-V Rayburn Co., 181 N. Dearborn, Chicago.

YOU'RE WANTED TO MAKE BIG MONEY controlling exclusive territory selling new patented kerosene lamp burner and wick feeder. Double light. Everyone buys. Pla[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]onal Mfg. Co., Dept. 538, To-[illegible]

MAN OR WOMAN OF GOOD CHARACTER [illegible] advertising; experience unnecessary; references required; $15 a week to start. Address Hudson King & Co., 5 South Clinton St., Chicago

AGENTS—MAKE A DOLLAR AN HOUR. Sell Mendets, a patent patch for instantly mending leaks in all utensils. Sample package and catalogue of household specialties free. Collette Mfg. Co., Dept. 707-A, Amsterdam, N. Y.

AGENTS, CREW MANAGERS, ALUMINUM salesmen—you can make $50.00 to $75.00 per week selling our [illegible] [illegible]

AGENTS MAKE A BIG "CLEAN-UP" SELLing our Household Specials. Quick sales. $25-$75 weekly a cinch. Write for colored circulars and immediate appointment. E. M. [illegible] President, K-34, Davis Bldg., Chicago

S[illegible]00 SURE. CONGENIAL WORK [illegible] [illegible]me among church people. Man or woman. 60 days or less. Spare time may be used. No experience required. International Bible Press, Dept. MP, Philadelphia.

SUIT $3.75, PANTS $1.00, MADE TO measure. For even a better offer than this write and ask for free samples and styles. Knickerbocker Tailoring Co., Dept. 414, Chicago, Ill.

LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS REPREsentatives to sell shirts, underwear, hosiery, [illegible] waists, skirts direct to homes. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 586 Broadway, New York City

AGENTS: $7 DAILY. NEW STEEL MANTLE Burners for Kerosene Lamps and Lanterns. Triples light. Smokeless. Odorless. Everybody buys. Sample 35c. Particulars free. Steel Mantle Co., 330 Huron St., Toledo, Ohio.

WE START YOU IN SOAP AND TOILET Goods Business without a dollar. Experience unnecessary. Carnation Co., 3024-Easton Ave., St. Louis.

WRITE FOR SAMPLE HOLLADAY'S NEW waterproof shoe polish, all colors. Retails 10c. and 25c. 100% profit. Quick sales. Holla[illegible]

WE PAY $36 A WEEK AND EXPENSES to men with rigs to introduce poultry compound. Year's contract. Imperial Mfg. Co., Dept. 67, Parsons, Kans.

AGENTS—I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME THAT'S [illegible] Sample [illegible] Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

WE PAY $80 A MONTH SALARY AND furnish rig and all expenses to introduce our guaranteed poultry and stock powders. Bigler Company, X 520, Springfield, Illinois

$10.00 PER 1,000 ALLOWED DISTRIButing free Soap Samples. Pocket Soap Co., Lebanon, N. H.

YOU CAN SELL OUR RAINCOATS. BIG commissions; free coat to good agents. Temple Raincoat Co., Templeton, Mass.

LADY AGENTS WANTED

WANTED: LADY AGENT—100% PROFIT selling our brand new Sanitary Drawers; every lady will buy; first time offered to agents; not sold in stores, send postal for particulars. The Moss Company, 44 Moss Bldg., Rochester, N. Y.

HELP WANTED

MEN AND WOMEN WANTED FOR U. S. Government positions. $75.00 month. Steady work. Common education sufficient. Pull unnecessary. Write immediately for free list of positions now obtainable. Franklin Institute, Dept. H30, Rochester, N. Y.

BE DETECTIVE: OPERATE OWN LOCALity or travel. Experience unnecessary. J. B. Sturgill, Norton, Va.

HELP WANTED—(Continued)

WILL ADVANCE EXPENSES AND PAY straight weekly salary of $18.00 to man or woman with fair education and good references. No canvassing. Staple line. Old-established firm. G. M. Nichols, Philadelphia, Pa., Pepper Bldg.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAY MAIL, POST OFfice, rural carrier "exams" everywhere soon. Get prepared by former Government civil service examiner. Booklet free. Arthur Robert Patterson, Rochester, N. Y.

$40 WEEKLY REPORTING NAMES, INformation. All or spare time. Men and women. No soliciting. Capital unnecessary. Be our representative. National Information Exchange, Box 1023, Omaha, Neb.

$25 WEEKLY COLLECTING NAMES. INstructions 10c. Returned if dissatisfied. Superba Co., WA, Baltimore, Md.

MALE HELP WANTED

WANTED. MEN AND WOMEN TO QUALIfy for Government positions. Several thousand appointments to be made next few months. Full information about openings, how to prepare, etc., free. Write immediately for booklet CG1034, Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

MOTORMEN-CONDUCTORS; $80 MONTHLY. Interurbans everywhere. Experience unnecessary. Qualify now, state age, booklet free. Electric Dept., 770 Syndicate Trust, St. Louis, Mo.

YOUNG MEN WANTED FOR AUTOMOBILE business. Big pay. We make you expert in ten weeks by mail. Pay after we secure you position. Century Automobile Institute, [illegible]

BE A DETECTIVE. EARN FROM $150.00 to $300.00 per month; travel over the world. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

GOVERNMENT WANTS CLERKS. EXAMinations everywhere April 12th. Sample questions free. Franklin Institute, Dept. H17[illegible], Rochester, N. Y.

I WILL START YOU EARNING $4 DAILY at home, silvering mirrors, free instructive booklet. G. F. Redmond, Dept. [illegible], Boston, Mass.

[illegible] EXAMINATIONS—THORough instruction, $[illegible]. Returned if not appointed. Particulars free. American Civil Service School, Washington, D. C.

$18. WEEK PAID CHAUFFEURS. LEARN while earning. Sample lessons free. Franklin Institute, Dept. H 809, Rochester, N. Y.

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, ALL RAILROADS; $120 monthly. Railway Association, Dept P 34, Brooklyn, N. Y.

FIREMEN AND BRAKEMEN: $100 MONTHly. Experience unnecessary. Hundreds needed by the best railroads everywhere. Particulars free. 686 Railway Bureau, East St. Louis, Ill.

BE A DETECTIVE; EARN $50-$100 WEEKly; travel over the world. Experience unnecessary. American Foreign Detective Institute, 115 Chemical, St. Louis.

GOVERNMENT WANTS CLERKS. EXAMinations everywhere April 12th. Sample questions free. Franklin Institute, Dept. H28, Rochester, N. Y.

SILVERING MIRRORS, PLATING TABLEware, auto-brass. Home booklet plans free. Clarence Sprinkle, Dept. 2, Marion, Ind.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

ANY INTELLIGENT WOMAN CAN MAKE $5 to $25 weekly at home, all year, doing dainty, profitable work. No canvassing, no [illegible] $1 [illegible] everything. Mail now. Satisfaction guaranteed. F. Fox, Box 28, Flatbush Station, Brooklyn, N. Y.

FIVE BRIGHT, CAPABLE LADIES TO travel, demonstrate and sell dealers. $25 to $50 per week. Railroad fare paid. Goodrich Drug Company, Dept. 85, Omaha, Neb.

LADIES $2.50 DAILY, STEADY SEWING; cut material furnished, prepaid; no canvassing; addressed, stamped envelope for par[illegible]

WOMEN TO SEW; MATERIAL PREPAID to your house. Plain sewing. No canvassing. Send stamped envelope for prices paid. Universal Co., Dept. 54, Phila., Pa.

WANTED—APRON MAKERS. SEND FIFteen cents. Returned if dissatisfied. Kenwood Shops, 4706 Ellis Ave., Chicago.

OLD COINS WANTED

WILL PAY $750.00 CASH FOR $5 GOLD piece dated 1822 (without "In God We Trust"); $50.00 for 1853 half, without arrows; $5.00 to $50.00 cash for large cent 1799, etc. We pay cash premiums for all large cents, eagle cents, 2c pieces, etc., and all rare U. S. and foreign coins, bills and stamps to 1912. Thousands of rare coins wanted. Many valuable pieces are in circulation. Send 4c. Get our large illustrated Coin Circular containing valuable information. It may mean much to you. You certainly have nothing to lose. Send to Numismatic Bank of Texas, Dept. 12, Fort Worth, Texas.

SONG POEMS

SONG WRITERS' "KEY TO SUCCESS" free! We compose and facilitate free publication or sale. Submit poems. Knickerbocker Studios, 521 Gaiety Bldg., New York.

WANTED—POEMS FOR POPULAR Music. Morris Music Pub. Co., 1500 Linden Ave., Baltimore, Md.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

$12,000,000 A MONTH FROM OIL. IN Oklahoma fields, where we own large property in proven field; producing oil wells on every side. Will develop on co-operative plan. Wonderful opportunity; small investors get deed to land and share in all wells drilled by our company. Invest $15; payable $5 cash, $2 monthly. May pay you thousands, as small investments have others in these fields. Write for literature, maps and bank endorsements. Oklahoma Oil Wells Company, 200 Stewart Bldg., Houston, Texas.

$15 MAY MAKE YOU $1,500. INVEST IN co-operative oil enterprise. Get interest in land and share in wells to be drilled on proven oil property in field where millions are being made. First well now being drilled. Only $15; terms $1 monthly. Write for free literature. Mary Owens Oil Co., 438 First Nat'l Bank, Houston, Texas.

INVEST $10. MAY MAKE A FORTUNE. Others have, why not you? Co-operative oil enterprise; get interested with us in valuable leases and wells to be drilled in proven oil field now making millions; payments $1 monthly. Write for literature and maps. Great Southern Oil Association, 900 Carter Bldg., Houston, Texas.

INFORMATION FURNISHED GRATIS REgarding stocks and bonds of any character. We buy and sell stocks and bonds on commission. All orders promptly executed. Special attention given to out of town clients. J. A. Parker & Co., Brokers, 15 Broad St. Estab. 1908, New York.

$12.50 INVESTED MAY MAKE $1,000. GET warranty deed also interest in co-operative well to be drilled near big gusher oil field. Terms $1 cash, $1 monthly. Four lot combination $48. Particulars free. Triangle Oil Co., 407 Carter Bldg., Houston, Texas.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE MAIL ORDER Field. Plain facts and inside information free. Sweatman, Box 60[illegible], Portland, Maine.

NON-BREAKABLE LAMP CHIMNEYS AND Smokeless Burners are sure sellers. D. [illegible], Grand Rapids, Mich.

REAL ESTATE

VIRGINIA & NORTH CAROLINA FARMS $15.00 per acre and up. Easy payments. Fruit, Dairy, Stock, mild climate. On railroad. Best markets nearby. Write for farm lists, information and N. & W. Rwy. Homeseeker, all free. F. H. LaBaume, Agrl. Agt., Norfolk & Western Ry., 248 N. & W. Bldg., Roanoke, Va.

SMALL MISSOURI FARM, $10 CASH AND $5 monthly; no interest or taxes; highly productive land; close to three big markets. Write for photographs and full information. Munger, D-133, N. Y. Life Bldg., Kansas City, Missouri.

WISCONSIN FARM LANDS

LANDOLOGY, A MAGAZINE GIVING THE facts in regard to the land situation. Three months' trial subscription free. If for a home, or as an investment you are thinking of buying good farm lands, simply write me a letter marking it personal and say, "Mail me Landology and all particulars free." Address Lloyd M. Skinner, Gen'l Mgr., Skidmore Land Co., 26 Skidmore Bldg., Marinette, Wis.

FARM LANDS

FERTILE VIRGINIA FARMS ALONG Chesapeake & Ohio Rwy., at $15 an acre and up on easy terms. Mild climate, rich soil, abundant rainfall, plentiful and cheap labor. Convenient to Eastern markets, also to good schools and churches. Write for free illustrated booklet on Southern farm homes. Address, K. T. Crawley, Indus. Agt., C. & O. Rwy., Room 1002, Richmond, Va.

FARMS WANTED

WANTED—FARMS—HAVE 3,357 BUYERS; describe your unsold property. 746 Farmers' Exchange, Denver, Colo.

MOVING PICTURE PLAYS

BIG MONEY WRITING MOVING PICTURE Plays. $100 each. Correspondence Course literary ability unnecessary. Write for free booklet, "How to Write Moving Picture Pla[illegible] Universal Publishing Company, 102 Fergus Falls, Minnesota.

WRITE PHOTOPLAYS, SHORT STORIES, poems; $100 each. No correspondence course. Details free. Atlas Publishing Co., 344, Cincinnati.

SHORT STORIES WANTED

WRITERS! — STORIES, POEMS, PLAYS, etc., are wanted for publication. Literary Bureau, B4, Hannibal, Mo.

HONEY

BEST QUALITY NEW CLOVER HONEY. 30 lb. can $3.45; two or more cans $3.30 [illegible] Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Sample 10 cts. Price list free. M. V. Facey, Preston, Minn.

NAMES

WE PAY 25c EACH FOR NAMES AND ADdresses. Send dime for contract. Directory. Grand Rapids, Mich.

PATENTS

PATENTS SECURED OR FEE RETURNED. Free patentability search and report. Send sketch and description of invention. Latest and most complete patent book ever published for free distribution. (Ninety pages.) George P. Kimmel, 260 Barrister Building, Washington, D. C.

WANTED, AN IDEA! WHO CAN THINK of some simple thing to patent? Protect your ideas, they may bring you wealth. Write for "Needed Inventions" "Patent Buyers" and "How to Get Your Patent and Your Money." Randolph & Co., Patent Attorneys, Dept. [illegible], Washington, D. C.

"PATENTS AND PATENT POSSIBILITIES" is a 72-page treatise telling what to invent and where to sell it. Manufacturers constantly writing for patents. Help supply the demand. Books free. H. S. Hill, 933 McLachlen Building, Washington, D. C.

PERSONAL

LET ME READ YOUR CHARACTER FROM your handwriting. Mind you get a good reading that will help you in love, health, business and domestic affairs. Price 10c. Money back if dissatisfied. H. G. Beauchamp, 2583 8th Ave., New York City.

PIMPLES, PUSTULES, ACNE ERUPTIONS, Red Nose, Marks, Scars, Discolorations permanently eradicated; natural skin restored. Describe case for free booklet. Dr. Rodgers, 36 W. Randolph St., Chicago.

INTERESTED IN YOUR FUTURE? SEND birth-date and 10c stamps for book, "Success and How Attained." Trial reading free. S. S. League, Box 116, Los Angeles, Calif. You may ask three questions.

FREE. IF NERVOUS, WEAK, RUN DOWN, write today for a trial package of Herculin, the wonderful upbuilding tonic. M. Oswald Co., 318 West 42d St., New York.

WILL SOME HONORABLE CAPABLE single man who wishes to better his social and financial condition write me at once? Particulars for stamp. Chance of lifetime. Address Prof. Ward, B420, Valley, Neb.

MARRY RICH—BIG LIST OF DESCRIPtions and photos of congenial people with means FREE. Sealed. Either sex. Standard Cor. Club, Grayslake, Illinois.

MARRY — FREE PHOTOS, BEAUTIFUL ladies; descriptions and directory; [illegible] when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 21, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and description free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 28, Kansas City, Mo.

LOVERS, SEND ONLY 20 CENTS, FOR $1.75 packages Patented Lovine Sachet. Real thing. Guaranteed. Never fails. Union, Box 100, Pal[illegible]

LADIES STOP WORRYING, $1.00 PERIODIcal Compound, safe, harmless, mailed in plain wrapper. Geo. [illegible] Stuart, 544 Jersey Ave., Elizabeth, N. J.

SPIRITUALIST — SEND DIME AND stamped envelope, three questions answered as test. Mrs. N. Williams, 934 Evans, Pueblo, Colo.

MARRY, MANY WEALTHY, WISH EARLY marriage, [illegible] years of experience, descriptions free. "The Successful Club," Box 556, Oakland, Calif.

CATHOLICS WISHING TO MARRY AND wanting introductions, write. Booklet free. Catholic Correspondence Club, Grand Rapids, Mich.

MARRY OR HAVE SWEETHEARTS EVERYwhere. 50,000 members. Membership 10c. Quality Club, Terre Haute, Ind.

MARRY RICH, JOIN AMERICAN CORREspondence Club. Biggest and best. Membership 10c. Terre Haute, Ind.

GENTLEMEN'S ARITCLE 10c. DIME BACK if dissatisfied. Sullivan Co., 24 Rose, Battle Creek, Mich.

15 CARDS DIFFERENT READING, FOR men only. 10c. Wm. Walker, Route 1, Cash, Ark.

BIG MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH FULL descriptions free. Many wealthy. Ideal Pub. Co., Auburn, N. Y.

SANITO COTS, PURE RUBBER, THREE sizes, one for 25c, 3-50c, 7-$1.00. BL. Rex Specialty Co., Kalamazoo, Mich.

HUNDREDS WEALTHY MEMBERS SEEKing early marriage. Description free. Mrs. Wrubel, 752 18th St., Oakland, Calif.

SILK PIECES. 3 DOZ. NICE LARGE pieces for Crazy Quilts, Pillows. Assorted colors. 10c. Geo. H. Quintard, Norwalk, Conn.

MARRIAGE PAPER. HIGHEST CHARacter; sealed; send 10c. B. W. Love, Box 1616, Denver, Colo.

"LOVERS' PERFUME POWDER." SECRET and full directions, one dime. Scientific Extract Co., Akron, Ohio.

WHO WILL WRITE? HARDWARE DEALer; worth $35,000; small town, would marry. 57-4th Street, San Francisco.

MARRY—BIG PAPER WITH ALL NAMES, addresses and photos, 25c. Box [illegible] Boston, M[illegible]

LEARN YOUR FUTURE — SEND DIME, stamp, birth date. L. LeNor, 2821M Charlotte, Kansas City, Mo.

GET MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL paper published. Mailed free. The Correspondent, Toledo, Ohio

FUTURE TOLD—10c BIRTHDATE, SATISfaction guaranteed. Florence Edwards, 305 S. La Salle St., Dept. A., Chicago.

GET MARRIED; LARGEST MATRIMONIAL magazine published. Mailed free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minn.

FUTURE AND PAST TOLD. SEND 10c and birth date. James Smith, 326 Madison St., Chicago

MARRIAGE PAPER COMPLETE WITH photos, descriptions, names and addresses 3 months for 25c. Wirn, 64, Grand Rapids, Mi[illegible]

25 BEAUTIFUL POSES CALIFORNIA bathing girls, 10c. 100, 25c. Enterprise Co., Y-3348 Lowe Ave., Chicago.

MARRIAGE PAPER FREE; BEST PUBlication for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency 55, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

YOUNG LADY, 20, WORTH $10,000 WOULD marry. J. Box 584, Messenger, Los Angeles, Cal.

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

INSECTS WANTED

SPEND VACATION, SPARE TIME, PROFitably—gathering butterflies, millers. Many kinds wanted for museums. I pay highest prices. Everybody. Send 2c stamp for particulars and 8-page folder. Sinclair. Box 244. D-90, Los Angeles, Cal.

OF INTEREST TO WOMEN

LADIES ATTENTION! HAND CROCHETED Corset Cover Square [illegible] Give size Price $[illegible] C. B. C. 28[illegible] North First St Fort Dodge Iowa

MOVING PICTURE BUSINESS

$35.00 PROFIT NIGHTLY. SMALL CAPItal starts you. No experience needed. We teach you the business. Catalog free. Atlas Moving Picture Company, Franklin Building, Chicago.

BOYS AND GIRLS

GUARANTEED WATCH OR GOLD PLATED bracelet free to boys and girls for placing sample packet seeds with friends. Ecker Seed Co., B-25, Cly, Pa.

MUSIC

TREY O' HEARTS, CATCHY RAG, LATEST out. To introduce, 10c. postpaid. A. E. Holch, Cripple Creek, Colo.

TOBACCO

KENTUCKY'S BEST NATURAL LEAF TObacco, chewing or smoking, parcel-post prepaid, 4 lbs., $1; 10 lbs., $2. L. Rosenblatt, Hawesville, Ky.

PORTRAITS

ENLARGED CRAYON PORTRAIT FREE from any photo for little spare time. Send stamp for particulars. C. F. Schreiber, Dansville. N. Y.

MOTORCYCLES

REBUILT MOTORCYCLES, ALL MAKES, like new, $25 to $200.00. Every machine guaranteed. New bicycles and motor supplies direct to you at factory prices. Write today for big free catalog and latest bargain price list. Western Supplies Co., 31 Larimer St., Denver, Colorado.

SUDAN SEED

SUDAN GRASS SEED: PURE; RECLEANED, field inspected, officially tested, double sacked, $6.00 hundred lbs. Satisfaction or money back. B. E. Miller. (Seed grower.) Carlton, Tex.

JAPANESE NOVELTY

SEND $1.00 for 50 JAPANESE NOVELTIES prepaid. Buy direct. Make money. Matsumoto-Do, Tokyo, Japan

BOOKS

PLAYS, SPEAKERS, DIALOGUES, DRILLS, Joke Books, Wigs and Beards. Catalogue free. Ames Publishing Co., Dept. 2, Clyde, Ohi

THESE WANT ADS CHANGE EACH WEEK

New offers come and go—old offers change—something new and different in each issue.

READ THEM THIS WEEK AND OFTEN

His Voice.

For a solid half hour the ambitious youth had been making the air hideous with what he called singing. He was showing off his abilities to a singing master, who sat as in a daze.

After one particularly unpleasant howl the singer turned to his listener.

"Well, sir," he asked, in a confident voice, "do you think I can ever do anything with my voice?"

The singing master eyed him balefully as he answered:

"Er—well, it might come in useful to yell for help in case of fire."

FRECKLES

Now Is the Time to Get Rid of These Ugly Spots.

There's no longer the slightest need of feeling ashamed of your freckles, as the prescription othine—double strength—is guaranteed to remove these homely spots.

Simply get an ounce of othine—double strength—from your druggist, and apply a little of it night and morning and you should soon see that even the worst freckles have begun to disappear, while the lighter ones have vanished entirely. It is seldom that more than one ounce is needed to completely clear the skin and gain a beautiful clear complexion.

Be sure to ask for the double strength othine, as this is sold under guarantee of money back if it fails to remove freckles.

The Castle of Lies.

(Continued from Page 11.)

whom I have despised that is to save us. A life for a life—these were the words I said to you at Lucerne. Now it is to be dishonor for dishonor. I am asking you a terrible sacrifice. I am dragging you with me to the depths. But there is no other to help us. Say that you will."

"Your grief robs you of your reason," I said gently. "Escape is not to be found in that way. It is the last hope of a desperate and unscrupulous adventuress, who has herself little hope of success. It is her last card, and she will lose nothing by playing it. But we, you and I, we risk everything——"

"Ah, you refuse! You are afraid of the risks. I might have known you would be afraid. That woman said that it was hopeless to ask a service so heroic from one who was a proven ——Oh, forgive me, I did not mean to say that."

"Miss Brett, I think there is no disgrace I would not gladly endure to help you. I swore to rescue your brother's honor if it were possible. If I could do so now, tho I sacrificed myself, I tell you I would. More than that, tho every instinct tells me that I should fail, I will do what you ask even now——"

"Heaven bless you!" she cried brokenly.

"But first of all I want you to realize clearly just what you are asking. I want you to be quite sure that you are not adding dishonor to dishonor in asking me to do this thing. No; it is not that I am afraid. I have not that kind of fear. But I think that neither of us should be so cowardly as to yield to this woman's demands. In the oratory yonder lies your brother. Ask yourself, when you see him, if it is merely the merciful hand of death that has smoothed his forehead, or whether the calm and serenity is that of a man who held the motto of his house, 'Honor, My Sword.'"

This appeal was perhaps not wholly sincere. One cannot deny facts because one wishes to. It still seemed to me that it must be true that Sir Mortimer was proven guilty of taking bribes.

Nor did I dare tell Helena now of my wild conjecture. I dared not raise her hopes at the risk of a speedy disillusionment. Once the papers were in my possession, together we could defy Madame de Varnier. And if disappointment was to be mine I hoped that by the bier of her brother Helena would recover her courage and clear vision.

Again I was alone. But Madame de Varnier, who had awaited the result of Helena's intercession, now came toward me. I saw with a thrill of thankfulness that the door of the room of the safe was not closed.

"You told me that it would be for her to decide," she said confidently. "I know that she has decided. And your own decision? Does your resolution falter?"

"You are mistaken." I began to pace the floor with rapid steps, advancing nearer and nearer to the room of the safe. "She has not yet decided. I believe with all my heart that she will refuse. She is in your oratory there. She will gain strength from the presence of the dead to defy you."

"Perhaps," sneered the woman. She seated herself near the table slightly turned from the room she had left.

An instant and I had gained it, and drawn the bolt. Another and I was on my knees, my fingers tremblingly whirling about the shining surface of the little knob that controlled the combination.

C-O-W-A-R-D

I whirled it this way and that, then pulled at the handle.

It resisted my efforts. A cold perspiration broke out on my forehead. I had been a victim of my own madness.

But again I moved the knob; this time slowly, with infinite care, with the calmness that comes with despair. I heard the woman without call my name in a frenzy of rage, her hands beating against the door.

Once more I turned the handle. It yielded to my touch. The safe was open.

I saw no papers of any sort in the large compartment. It was empty with the exception of a jewel case. I slipped out a drawer, the only one in the safe. Two packets were there.

I seized them greedily. I was about to open them when a shadow fell across the room. There was a light step behind me. I looked up, the paper in my hand.

Captain Forbes was standing by my side.

He had made his entrance thru the open window.

"Good evening, Sir Mortimer!"

I rose to my feet, staring at him stupefied.

"I am sorry if my abrupt and unceremonious entrance has alarmed you," he said mockingly, and regarded me with a cold smile.

"You have managed to escape," I stammered.

"Exactly; and I hope I do not inconvenience you. With your permission, sir, I will withdraw the bolt. This little room reminds me too well of the one I have just left. It is too cramped for my taste."

He brushed by me brusquely and drew the bolt. I thrust the papers in my breast pocket. With one motion I closed the safe softly, and turned the knob.

Further chapters of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

Not to Be Outdone.

A city [illegible] recently [illegible] his country cousin [illegible] from the city, wishing to explain the joys of metropolitan life, said:

"We certainly have been having fun the last few days. Thursday we autoed to the country club and golfed until dark, then trolleyed back to town and danced until morning."

The country cousin was not to be stumped in the least and began telling of some of the pleasures of the simple life.

"We have had pretty good [illegible] too. One day we bagged it [illegible] Ned's, and went out to the back lot, where we baseballed all the afternoon. In the evening we sneaked up into the attic and poker[illegible]"

A sturdy old farmer who was listening, not to be outdone, took up the conversation at this point and said:

"I was having [illegible] about this time myself. I [illegible] tell and [illegible] Then I [illegible] until 9 o'clock, after which I [illegible] steaded until the clock [illegible] which I breakfasted until it was time to go muling again.

* * *

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Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879

Published Every Saturday
By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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1,250,000

COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

It's useless to advertise for lost faith.

A divorce decree is a parting injunction.

A kiss may be a reward or a punishment.

Marriage is an eye salve that restores the sight of blind lovers.

An excellent way to flatter a woman is to keep still and listen.

No wonder a typewriter gets rattled when a pretty girl works it.

The man who is honest merely from policy is practically dishonest.

A wonder lasts nine days—but a woman's curiosity goes on forever.

Thru a man's tongue we get a glimpse of his brains—or his lack thereof.

Seeing is not always believing. We see a lot of people we can't believe.

[illegible] liquor at retail and drinking it wholesale has ruined many a man.

It's a wonder the egotist doesn't lose his voice from singing his own praise.

If we could only recognize our duty we should be in a position to dodge it.

However, the engineer of a train of thought should stop to think occasionally.

The man who is most discreet when sober is the biggest fool when otherwise.

Moles and poor physicians are easily traced by the holes they leave in the ground.

A man may be a good talker and still have serious impediments in his thoughts.

Perhaps the boy who plays marbles or keeps may be giving away libraries in after years.

Probably a man never fully realizes how golden silence is until he tries to buy some of it.

When a small boy gets his fingers caught in the pantry door it isn't the jam he is looking for.

If you want to study human nature don't patronize a correspondence school. Watch your neighbors.

It's a good thing for a man's peace of mind that he doesn't know what other people know about him.

The liar who can repeat a story ten times without any alteration deserves more credit than he get

Every time the sun shines the pessimist consoles himself with the belief that it's raining somewhere.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

Tailor made coats have bright colored facings.

A fad for ball buttons of steel is to be noticed on the imported frocks.

The bolero, which may be a big feature of spring styles, is effectively used now and then on midwinter frock

Shoulders are sure to be sloping, with the sleeves slipping down as they will for spring. The sleeves, too, will flare at the wrists.

If you wish to wear your new gown for six months and have it in fashion, be careful not to fashion it with the present exaggerated full skirt and nipped-in waist, for fashion whispers a change.

The smartest kerchiefs for thrusting into the breast pockets of tailored coats are of a sheer, fine linen, with very narrow hemstitched hems in color. The one-color woman will have a dozen of these dainty kerchiefs, bordered with her favorite shade; but most women prefer a variety of shades, so delicate and desirable are the colors. One may purchase a box of these handkerchiefs with hems in flesh pink, pastel blue, buff, spring green and lilac.

◆

RECIPES.

BROWN SAUCE.—One-half cupful of brown sugar mixed with one-fourth of a cupful of butter; add a pint of hot water, a little vinegar and as much flavoring as desired. Thicken with one tablespoonful of flour moistened with a little milk and boil. This sauce should be served hot.

POTATOES WITH CHEESE.—Put creamed potatoes into a baking dish and cover with buttered breadcrumbs and grated cheese. Heat in the oven till the crumbs are brown. Or use on the potatoes the cheese sauce, and cover with buttered crumbs.

MOTHER'S GINGERSNAPS.—One cup shortening, one cup sugar, one cup molasses, one heaping tablespoon ginger, and a heaping teaspoon of soda dissolved in very little warm water. Flour to roll out, the less the better.

ORANGE CREAM—Boil the rind of a Seville orange very tender; beat it fine in a mortar; put into it the juice of a [illegible] orange, four ounces of loaf sugar [illegible] four eggs. Beat all together for ten minutes, then by gentle degrees pour in a pint of boiling cream; beat till cold. Put into custard cups, set into a deep dish of boiling water and let them stand till cold again. Put at the top small strips of orange paring cut thin or preserved chips.

◆

NEEDLEWORK.

The sheer, beautifully embroidered baby bibs, which, after all, are not serviceable, can be turned into lovely little yokes for baby's best dresses, where the embroidery really shows to the best advantage.

One of the easiest ways to add monograms to household linens is to fill each letter with French knots. By using this treatment one is saved the work of padding. Of course, to gain an effective result it is necessary to place the knots close together.

◆

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

You can produce a brilliant polish on your glassware by adding a little turpentine to the washing water, about a couple of teaspoonfuls to the gallon.

When ironing round doilies or luncheon cloths place a heavy bath towel or piece of flannel on the board, then lay the linen so that the threads are parallel and at right angles to the board. If placed in this way the iron will naturally move with the threads of the linen. If the threads of the linen are ironed diagonally, the linen will wear out much more quickly, so care should be taken to move the iron paralled with the threads of the linen. Embroidered pieces are always ironed on the wrong side.

◆

HEALTH NOTES.

There are two very simple but effective remedies for that kind of sleeplessness that comes from overwork or nervous exhaustion. One is to have the feet very warm. Put them against a rubber bag filled with hot water. A rubber bag is better than an earthen bottle, as it will retain the heat for hours. The second method is much more simple. Discard the pillow, turn over and lie on the stomach with hands clasped under the forehead to lift the head a trifle. This will often send one to sleep

The thing to do if you are desirous of losing flesh is to restrict your diet to clear soups, lean meats, vegetables which contain iron but no fat, such as spinach, carrots, beets, turnips, squash, egg plant, oyster plant, celery, tomatoes, brussels sprouts, cabbage and string beans. Eat no corn, potatoes, either white or sweet; lima beans, peas, white bread, thick gravies, mayonnaise dressings, or salad; in fact, any dressing that contains much olive oil, or desserts. Eat fruit in the place of dessert, cut out cream and sugar in your cereal; in fact, eliminate cereal altogether from your menu

◆

SHORT DRESSES.

Short dresses are becoming more popular every day. Those who first frowned on them now admire them, and say that they are not only sensible, but becoming, as well as economical.

A long dress in the house, on a well-swept carpet, is all very well—we do not deny its gracefulness—but a long dress on the street is an abomination. It is in your own way; it is in the way of everybody else. If we hold it up, we look like a washerwoman turned fore part behind, and it draws all our clothes forward in a way which would destroy the grace of a Ninon de l'Enclos. Everybody behind us can see the lining of the skirt, and notice the frayed braid, for braid is always frayed on a long dress, and take observations on our petticoat and stockings and the tops of our boots.

We have no hands to help ourselves with—one has to hold the muff or parasol, as the season may be, and the other is employed with the train.

If we let it drag, either it is trodden off in the course of half an hour's promenade, or else six feet of the sidewalk behind us is not utilized, for the pedestrians must fall back, or plant their feet on that moving mass of ruffles and fluting and cigar stumps and silk fringe and street-car straw, and thus win for themselves the unconquerable hatred of the wearer, for, altho we all know that long dresses on the street are a nuisance and that people cannot avoid stepping on them, we are always indignant when they are stepped on

With a short dress, a woman has some liberty. She has her hands for free use. She may look round about her without the fear that while she is doing it somebody will put a foot thru her two-dollar-a-yard lace, and tramp off with a couple of yards of it. She may get out of a street car without looking back to see if she is clear behind, and safe from being dragged along, and perhaps maimed for life.

She can defy rain and mud. She doesn't have to go round a wisp of straw lest she take it up on her fringes. She can cross a street without stepping on her dress and falling down in the mud, for the nearest policeman to pick her up, and all the boys to laugh at and watch to see her do it next time.

If she has a pretty foot, she can show it; and if she has a homely foot, everybody knew it before, so there will be nothing lost there.

For economy, comfort, health, and neatness, give us short dresses on the street. Let everybody put them on, and be happy. Fashion, for once, has shown herself sensible.

Long may she continue in the good way!

◆ ◆ ◆

Back Fire.

The English assignment was: Write a short theme using ten words which you have never used before. This is what a freshman accomplished:

"One of the idiosyncrasies of this typographical expedition is that the usually otiose teamster is compelled to mollify and transmogrify into useful forms by behemothian, in fact almost sysiphean swink, the rife oestrus of his quadrupeds."

The instructor is now taking a course under Professor Kittredge in etymology.

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Glen, the Boy Pilot

Or, Rafting on the Muskalong

By Milford Merrill

Author of "Riding the Logs," etc.

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Begun in No. 8, February 19. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XVI.

AS MAY be imagined, Glen Dayton was visibly surprised and pleased at the unexpected liberality of his employer. The man had the name on the river of being exacting to the last degree in his business transactions, and the boy raftsman had expected to stand the whole loss of the shingles.

"I thank you, Mr. Dedham," he said, with a laugh. "This will please Aunt Eunice. We'll have something to live on thru the winter, anyhow."

"What will you do this winter, Glen?"

"I haven't decided yet."

"Get a job in Oxbow, I imagine?"

"Perhaps."

"Why not go into the woods, boy?"

"I have thought of that."

"I shall need another foreman, and the wages won't be stingy."

"I'll think about it, sir."

"I wish you would. Anyhow, Glen, you must come in the spring and manage my rafting job again."

"I wouldn't care to promise, Mr. Dedham," said Glen, who had thought it over, and inwardly almost decided to cut out the millowner hereafter. His present very kindly attitude had, however, softened him toward the maker of lumber, and he was almost persuaded to take another season of rafting with the man of Old Woman's Bend.

"That's all right," chuckled the millowner. "I reckon we shall see you at the old job next year. Don't hang back because of the blockaders at Oxbow. I have talked with Mr. Beaver of Wenago, [illegible] with me to get the trouble fixed up with those fellows before navigation opens. There'll be no more trouble of that sort, believe me."

Glen left the presence of Mr. Dedham feeling quite happy. His rafting job had not netted him as much as he had reason to hope for at the begining of the season, yet he had made an impression on the business world that would be of help to him in the future. Already he had received invitations thru the mail to call upon some of the business men of the valley. He was in no hurry to accept any offer at the present time.

Jack Adams accompanied Glen to Oxbow. The boy raftsman had fallen in love with his helper from across the lake, and suggested that he remain with him for the winter.

"No," quickly decided Jack, "I can't do that. Granddaddy Adams'll be looking for me to help him in the shop this winter. You see, in the summer, there ain't much doing in his line; in winter comes the blacksmith's harvest."

"In that case why not induce the old gentleman to come to Michigan and run a shop in the woods; it would pay him big?"

"I'll speak to him about it, Glen."

The two boys stood on the dock beside a tall-masted schooner laden with lumber, which was about to cast off, being the last load for Chicago for the season. The passenger traffic was not sufficient to pay, and the steam vessels had gone into winter quarters.

"One thing, Glen."

"Well?" as the boys clasped hands for the last time.

"That horn of mine."

"What about it?"

"I shall have to tell gran'ther that I lent it to you. He'd never forgive me if he knew I lost it."

"I wouldn't advise telling any lies, Jack," laughed Glen. "Rest easy about the horn. I'll see the Princes, and if possible induce them to part with their horn, which is every bit as good as the one you lost."

"The one they have is my horn," blurted Jack, his wide, good-humored face reddening. "You don't suppose there'd be two exactly alike, do you?"

"Why, I can conceive of such a thing, Jack."

"I can't then. My own mark was on the horn. Don't buy it, Glen. I won't humor the thieves enough for that."

"All right, Jack."

The two boys separated, young Adams giving his promise to return in the spring and work with his friend.

Glen was halfway home, passing down a short street in the outskirts of the town, when he ran upon a tall boy of about his own age, who was hurrying as tho to catch a train.

"Hello!" exclaimed Glen.

"Gee whiz! Glen Dayton, as I live!"

The two boys shook hands heartily.

The slim boy was Glen's cousin, Jared Grayson, who had spent the summer and early fall on one of the passenger steamers plying between Chicago and several of the lake ports on the Michigan side.

"I am mighty glad to see you, Jay."

"Same here, Glen. Got done on the river?"

"Everything wound up yesterday, Jay."

"Good enough. I have quit the lake. Have got my pay in my breeches pocket I feel like a man just out of prisön after a term of years. We'll be together this winter, Glen?"

"I hope so, Jay."

"How's Letty and the rest?"

"Well and happy, cousin," smiled Glen.

"I'm going up to the Waldens' now," announced the tall boy, who was a very happy sort, with a sunny nature and exuberant spirits. He and Glen were bosom friends, equally friendly with Letty and her family.

"I will see you later, Jared."

"Oh, say, Glen," called Jared, as the raftsman was moving on. Glen halted and turned toward his cousin.

"What about this fellow, Ned Somers? I've heard about him and Miss Myra Weatherby, and that you and he got into a scrap last summer. What was there to it, anyhow?"

Glen explained all there was to the little unpleasantness between himself and the Weatherby bookkeeper. He knew that Jared hated affectation as much as himself, and so painted the Somers boy in his true colors.

"He means to get in with Miss Myra, it seems," said Jared. "Don't you let him do it, Glen."

"What is it to me?" demanded the raftsman.

"A lot," declared the boy boatman. "Myra has a soft spot in her heart for you, Glen. She has shown it in a dozen instances. I'd hate to see a milk-sop like Ned Somers win out with her."

"She's nothing but a child, Jared."

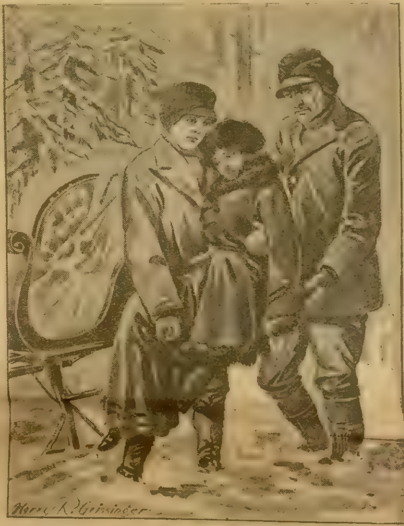
"She's 16, ain't she?"

"About that, I think."

"Well, girls at that age are older than boys at 20. I'd like to get a poke at Somers once. Such fellows make me tired."

Glen smiled at his friend's earnestness, resuming his walk homeward.

He met his aunt with a kiss.



It proved to be Myra.

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"We're all right for the winter," he said. "I think I'll keep my money in the house after this. No more banks for me."

"I would not advise that, Glen," said his aunt. "Banks are not all like Dan Brawl's."

"Well, maybe not, but you can't trust any of them."

"How about the money you got from this queer old hermit?"

"Well, I put that in the bank, of course. If the bank should suspend I wouldn't be to blame for the loss of that man's money. I put a notice in the paper hoping he would see it and call for his money, but it hasn't brought results yet."

"The man is evidently demented," said Mrs. Trescott.

"Evidently," admitted the boy.

A few days later a flurry of snow whitened the earth, reminding the good people of Oxbow that winter was on the way.

Glen and his Aunt Eunice had received an invitation to a Thanksgiving party at one of the well-to-do homes of the city. The boy was anxious enough to attend, since he thought he might see Myra once more, and he had thought a good deal about the girl lately. She might have believed the story Ned Somers had told of his frequenting saloons, yet why should he care? He did care, nevertheless. Glen wished to appear well in the eyes of the world. He had an innate honesty of soul that shrank from the rougher side of life.

Ned had really seen him coming from a saloon, and had placed the worst sort of interpretation upon it. Well, let it go. He would tell the exact facts when next he saw Myra. As for Letty, she knew how guiltless he was of even the thought of wrongdoing.

He saw the millionaire's girl that night at the party, and she ignored his presence altogether. She was very much in the company of Ned Somers. Glen had expected to meet Letty and Jared there, but neither one appeared. He learned that Mrs. Walden was ill and Letty had stayed at home to be with her.

Despite the offish acting of Myra, Glen managed to pass a very comfortable evening till near the close, when he came suddenly in contact with Ned Somers, who brushed against him rather rudely as they were passing in the whirl of a cotillion.

Just a short time later Ned and Myra passed within speaking distance, and the former was heard to say: "The jail bird carries his head high [illegible]"

Glen flushed to the temples. His companion was a Miss Gregory, apparently a newcomer to the town. She heard the words, and turned a questioning look at her companion.

"Oh, yes, he means me!" said Glen, biting his lip.

His partner became rather cold after that, and Glen escorted her to a seat without explaining. He was too angry to trust himself to attempt it.

"I'll make you repent that speech!" muttered Glen, as he turned down the room in search of Ned Somers. The bookkeeper and Myra had withdrawn, so there was no encounter that night. Glen, however, laid that remark up against Somers, promising himself an accounting at some future time.

"So Myra has concluded to use me for a mat for her feet, it seems," muttered the boy raftsman in the privacy of his own small room. "All right, my haughty dame. I'll see the time that I can buy and sell your father out a dozen times," with which speech Glen pulled off his clothes and jumped into bed.

CHAPTER XVII.

"WHOA, Dime, whoa!" The big cylinder of pine came to a halt, fitting snugly at the pinnacle of the load that filled the broad bunks of the logging sled.

Snow everywhere. Jared Grayson wielded the goad-stick. He had learned the knack of driving oxen from an old Penobscotter, and down there in the Maine woods all ox teamsters wield a goad-stick instead of a whip, as in the West.

Glen gathered up the reins and clambered to the top of the load. He had already tossed the binding-chain over and Jared made it fast to the sway-bar. Then a long bit of sapling was inserted, the slim end bent backward and made fast with a smaller chain, which bound the load solidly to the sleighs.

"The skidders are catching up with the sawyers," said Glen.

"That's right," laughed Jared, who was himself the best skidder and loader in the woods. "The snow'll be deep after a little, tho; then the cutters'll get ahead again. How is Ben Logan?"

"On the mend. He will be able to take his team again by Monday."

"I suppose you'll be glad of that, Glen?"

The boy skidder leaned his shoulder against the near ox, which was contentedly chewing his quid. He glanced up at Glen on the top of the big pyramid of pine logs, remembering that his cousin was foreman in the woods, and that it had been a good while since he had drawn a rein over a span of horses. Glen had taken the place of one of the sick teamsters, not having been able to find a new man.

"Glad for Ben, of course," returned the boy on the load of logs.

"And for yourself, I reckon. How does it seem to drive team, Glen? Remember the days when we used to race it on the road going to and from the old gristmill? Of course you do, and how you, with a load of grist, outran Joe Pierson, who had the hired girl as a passenger in an ordinary democrat."

"Of course I remember," and Glen laughed at the absurdity of his racing one of Oxbow's best drivers, who ran light, while he had a considerable load of wheat and flour. He had won the race, however, humiliating Joe Pierson, the shanty choreboy and bookkeeper. Joe promised Glen a thrashing for that, but as he afterward married the hired girl his enmity slackened, he and Glen becoming good friends.

"You want to look out for the hill at the creek, Glen."

"Trust me for that."

"This snow last night has covered the sanding——"

"Don't fear about that," quickly uttered the boy on the load. "Jimmy'll see that the sand is kept clean of snow. He's the best hill man I ever saw."

"Jimmy Dicker is all right," agreed the other.

With a whistle Jared turned, spoke to his oxen, and drove them back to where another sleigh had drawn up beside a skidway waiting to be loaded. Glen clucked to his horses and moved on down the glassy road.

It was midwinter, and Glen Dayton was having an excellent run of luck. He was a jobber this winter, having contracted with John A. Beaver to cut and place in the river six million feet of pine logs.

"I like you, Glen," the Wenago mill-owner had said. "It pleases me to note how you are forging to the front. Some of [illegible] lumbermen were once roustabouts in a logging camp. Dan Brawl, the banker, was once a lumberjack."

Glen might have told him that being a rascally banker was far less to his credit that being an ordinary lumberjack, but he refrained.

"There's a chance for you to make a lot of money on a job like mine," continued Mr. Beaver. "I believe, if we have plenty of snow, you can pull out with a nice lump to your credit."

And up to the middle of the winter the snow was in evidence almost daily. Glen's only fear now was that it would get too deep for profitable lumbering operations. In any event he had a good start toward a successful winter, and was very much elated in consequence.

It was a two-mile drive to the river. Glen reached the summit of the long hill down which the logs had to be drawn in order to reach the river bank. Today the snow had fallen plentifully. He noted that Jimmy, the hill man, had been busy. The new snow had been swept clean, leaving the sanded track cleanly exposed.

About two-thirds the way down the hill the road branched, one toward the river continuing straight ahead, the other turning to the right, crossing a milldam which held back a big pond. Below the dam was a deep gully thru which the creek ran.

Just before reaching the forks, Glen was forced to draw his load to the right in order to get partially off the sand. In doing this the sleighs shunted suddenly ahead, throwing the whole load onto unsanded snow.

"Whoa, Bill, whoa!" called the driver drawing his reins taut.

Too late! The four-ton weight was too much for the horses, and they started down the glistening branch at a swift pace. Old Jake Footstang, the storekeeper, ran out on his front steps as the team and boy swept by.

"Keep straight ahead across the dam, boy!" he yelled, but Glen, when near the foot of the hill, swerved the animals to the left, right on the brink of the deep gully, determined to fetch his load back onto the river road.

Footstang stood in open-mouthed astonishment as he saw the heavily laden

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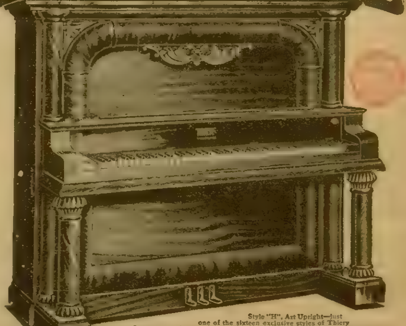

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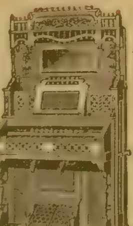

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sleighs slue around, turn, cant upon a single runner, and glide along the very brink of the deep gulch without overturning. The driver's hat blew off, his dark hair floating like a chestnut flag to the chill breeze.

"Mortal man, but that was a close shave!" gasped the storekeeper.

And Glen Dayton glared back over his shoulder, thrilled and trembling over his narrow escape from instant death.

"I wouldn't take such a chance again for a million dollars," said he afterward, when telling the incident. "I was so weak when I realized the narrow margin there had been between me and death, I could hardly hold the reins till I got to the rollbank."

Glen's narrow escape became the talk of the camps. He knew that the storekeeper's advice to keep straight ahead across the dam was the sensible course to pursue, but somehow he had it in mind that he must get his load to the banking ground on the river, and the danger was a secondary consideration.

"I wouldn't a gin a copper cent for your chanct," declared Jimmy, when he ran clear to the rollbank to see if his boss was uninjured.

Glen smiled feebly, trying to make light of the circumstance.

"I'll be more careful in the future," was the boy's only comment.

"You took more chances than you did when you raced Joe Pierson with your bags of grist, Glen," chuckled Jared, when he heard of his cousin's adventure on the hill. "If you'd been killed Miss Myra'd felt awful."

"Stuff and nonsense!" retorted Glen.

"And Letty would have about died, too."

"Don't be a fool, Jay!" snapped Glen.

"I won't. You are alive, so let's be thankful. I hope Ben'll be on deck tomorrow so our boss won't murder himself."

After that little episode affairs in the woods moved along smoothly. Ben, the teamster, returned to work, and Glen was free to oversee the general logging operations.

It was near the spring breakup. Glen had nearly every log on the rollbank; his winter's job was nearing the end, and the boy woodsman was in a very happy frame of mind. Jared had fetched Letty Walden to the shanties on one occasion, and she had cheered Glen with her bright smile and encouraging words.

One day, while he was engaged in inspecting a skidway of Norway pine about half a mile from the shanties, his ear caught the sound of a falling tree, followed immediately by a sharp scream and the ragged jingle of sleigh bells, as tho a horse were tearing the air with unwonted speed.

"That's a runaway, by gum!" cried the man who was shoveling snow off the rows of logs on the skidway.

Glen darted into the road just as a single horse attached to a swellbox cutter came tearing down upon him. The buffalo robe was out, swinging by one corner, and leaning across the curved dashboard was a young girl, her hat gone, her hair disheveled, her white face as ghastly as that of one dead.

Glen sprang to the edge of the road, snatched the dangling reins, and was dragged several rods before he succeeded in cooling down the fiery animal attached to the cutter.

The man who had been shoveling snow came to his employer's assistance, the cutter was righted, its occupant lifted to the ground. It proved to be Myra, who had fainted.

Glen was very much alarmed. He had never seen any one in a faint before. All the girls he knew were ruddy and healthy, without a spark of anemia in their makeup. His first thought was that the girl was dead.

Having cooled down the excited animal, tying up one tug, the boy drove to the shanty. Good Mrs. Gerald, the shanty cook, took immediate charge of the unfortunate girl. Glen went then to look after the horse, which had now got over its fright, and was calmly munching hay in one of the stables.

"You saved the gal's life," said the stableman.

Mrs. Gerald called to Glen, who hastened back to the shanty.

"The girl is all right, Mr. Dayton. She's herself ag'in, but the feller 'at was with her—where's he?"

"She had a companion then?"

"Yes, a Mr. Somers."

"I see," remarked Glen. "I'll go immediately and look for him."

Taking the stableman with him, the boy jobber hastened down the road over which the runaway horse had lately passed. They found Somers half a mile down the road, sitting in the snow, with his back against a tree.

He tried to smile as Glen bent over him.

"Hurt much?" asked Glen.

"I'm about killed," groaned the bookkeeper. "Your men felled a tree close to the road, and the noise scared the horse. How is Myra?"

"What were you doing here, anyhow?"

"Myra's doings, not mine. She wanted to see a lumber camp in action, so I consented to drive her over. I'm afraid my leg is broken," and the boy groaned once more.

"We'll take you to camp," said Glen, whose ill feeling toward the fallen youth was very much mitigated when he saw his present pitiful plight.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MYRA WEATHERBY did not seem fully to recover from the shock of the runaway, altho her escort was soon on his feet again, somewhat the worse for his fall from the cutter.

Glen at once dispatched a man and team to Oxbow with the invalids. He had tried to talk with the girl, but she scarcely noticed him, her mind apparently a blank for the time being. The whole affair was a misfortune that the boy woodsman regretted very much. He agreed to send the horse and cutter home within a day or two.

The logging operations proceeded with renewed vigor as the time for the breakup came. No further accidents happened, and Glen could see a nice little sum laid up for himself from the winter's transactions.

Two days after the runaway Glen drove to Oxbow with the Weatherby horse and cutter. The sleighing was fast disappearing. He hitched Black Jim to the rear of the cutter, tossing his saddle into the sleigh.

It was nearly night when he arrived at the home of the Oxbow millowner. The Weatherby stableman cared for the animals while Glen went in to inquire after Myra.

"Yes, she is getting along," said the maid, "and she wants to see you. Come right in this way."

Glen was shown into a dainty room, finished in oak, carpeted and made pleasant in every way that money could make possible.

Myra sat in a big upholstered rocker looking quite pale and languid. She held out a hand to the boy woodsman, smiling wanly.

"I hope you weren't hurt very bad, Miss Weatherby," spoke the boy, advancing to her chair. He took her hand and pressed it in a sympathetic way. "I have brought back your horse and cutter."

The girl sat silent, a tear stealing from under her long lashes. Glen stood, somewhat embarrassed.

"Will you forgive me, Glen?" she asked in a feeble voice.

"For what?" he asked.

"For my mean actions."

"Cut it out," said Glen, smiling. "I haven't noticed anything wrong with you, Myra. Of course that tadpole who takes you about is a shad who needs licking, but I guess he got the scare of his life that day, up in the big woods. Lucky he wasn't killed."

"And the same with me," moaned the white lips of the girl.

"Oh, well, you will soon be all right. Aren't you feeling better?"

"Yes, much better. It was the shock, the doctor says."

"Very likely."

Glen started to withdraw.

"Don't go yet, Glen!" cried the girl, rousing from her lethargy with a suddenness that surprised her visitor. "I've got a lot to tell you."

"I don't think I have time to listen," said he, remembering how she had treated him since that encounter on the street in the summer.

He knew that Ned Somers had slandered him to the rich lumberman's girl, yet he would in no way seek to refute these slanders. She was welcome to think all she cared to of a fellow like Somers. As for himself, he and Myra were not of very congenial natures, anyhow. It wouldn't take much to make him despise her, even with all the wealth she had at her back. He wished to see Letty Walden before his return to the woods, and so must not tarry too long here.

"Please sit down, Glen."

Had it been a command he would not have complied. As it was he sat down very gingerly in a chair a few feet removed from Myra.

"I think I'd better be going," he offered hurriedly. "Now that I know you are doing well, I have no call to stop longer."

"Would you like to see my father?"

"Not particularly."

"He wants to see you, Glen."

"Aren't you mistaken, Myra?"

"No, I heard him say so only a few days ago; that was really my reason for taking that trip to the Wenago woods when the horse ran away. You see, he has been thinking a good deal about you lately. I knew he wanted to talk with you, and so I dared Ned to drive up there. It was a long ride, but we would have made it all right if it hadn't been for the accident."

All of this did not interest the boy logger. His relations with Shedd Weatherby were not of the best since the boom-cutting incident of the previous summer.

"Is that all?" he presently queried.

"Isn't it enough?"

"I am not interested." He rose to his feet, toying with his hat. "I am very glad to know that you are all right, Myra. You will kindly excuse me now. We jobbers have our hands full most of the

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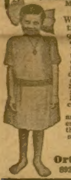

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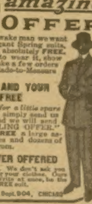

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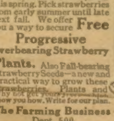

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time, and are not prepared to entertain ladies. I hope——"

"Please, Glen, sit down, won't you?"

The girl's voice had such a pleading ring that Glen plumped himself back into his chair, wondering what was coming next.

"There," with a long sigh, "that is better. I want you to forgive me, Glen."

"I tell you there's nothing to forgive, nothing at all."

"But you are angry with me?"

"Not particularly."

"Oh, I know you are, that's why I want you to forgive me." She spoke earnestly, the tears still moistening her eyes. "Won't you be friends again, Glen? If you won't I shall hate myself to death."

He laughed at that last statement of the girl, and the lugubrious look on her face quite startled him. He wondered what girls were made of anyhow. Here was this pert, proud miss, the only child of the richest man in Oxbow, pleading with a common lumberjack to forgive her for some imagined offense.

"I am your friend, Miss Weatherby," finally exploded Glen.

He got to his feet, took her hand and said good-by. With that he walked from the room and the house. It was rather nice to have Myra own up to having treated him shabbily. He rather liked her for it.

Before he had gone far he ran upon Shedd Weatherby coming briskly along the walk toward the house.

"Hello, Glen! I am glad to see you," and the millowner held out his hand.

This was his first offer of amity since he had prosecuted the boy raftsman for cutting the company boom.

"Good evening, sir," greeted the boy. He would have passed on had not the great man clung tightly to his hand.

"Come in, my boy; I wish to talk with you."

"Thank you, sir, but I am due back at the camp early tomorrow. I really haven't time for a visit just now."

Glen felt cold and hot as he regarded the hard face of the man of money. Unscrupulousness was written on the hard countenance. Glen had learned to distrust the intentions of this particular millowner. He had resolved to have no further business relations with him.

"You are a pretty busy boy, they tell me."

"They have told you the truth, sir."

"No doubt about it," laughing. "You won't come in, then?"

"Thank you, no."

"You must be about thru in the woods?"

"Expect to finish up within a week."

"Good. You will come and see me after that, Glen?"

The speaker seemed disposed to be very friendly. The boy was suspicious, refusing to enthuse. He had known Shedd Weatherby long enough to understand that he was very selfish, and that he had very little sympathy with a struggling young man who was anxious to get ahead in the world.

"What I may do after that I am not prepared to say," returned Glen.

"Well, I want to talk to you, to make you an offer," persisted the lumberman, stroking his chin and smiling in his well-known bland way.

"All right," from Glen.

"You will let me show you something worth considering, won't you, boy?"

"What is it?"

"A chance to make a mint of money in a short time," chuckled the other. "You can't go wrong. How much will you make out of your present job?"

"I shan't go broke, at any rate," declared Glen.

"As you did in the rafting business, eh?"

"Whoever told you that, sir, fibbed," and Glen faced the millowner with a calm assurance that won the admiration of the other.

"Good boy!" he cried. "You have the sand, my boy, and that's what wins every day in the week. Better come in and let me place you on the highroad to a fortune. I have followed you, Glen, ever since——"

"Ever since you tried to land me in the penitentiary," broke in Glen, reddening with indignation. "You knew I was innocent, yet you had the heart to prosecute an innocent boy. I can't forget that, Mr. Weatherby. Business relations between you and me are closed forever. Sometime I shall be in a position to contest you on an even footing. Till then, sir, I would rather have nothing to do with you."

"Well, well, and then some!" gasped the astonished millowner, as he gazed after the departing form of his one-time employe. "High and mighty for a youngster, I admit. I can't help admiring his grit, anyhow."

The king of Oxbow walked thoughtfully into the house.

Glen hastened to take Black Jim from the stable. He galloped down to his aunt's cottage, and then found a shed in which to keep his horse till morning. He would have sooner seen Black Jim dead than an occupant for even one night of a stable owned by the king of Oxbow. It seemed to the boy lumberman that he was almost hating the very sight of Shedd Weatherby. Altho the man had been good to him at times, he yet had no scruples about grinding him into the mire when it so suited him.

Glen wondered if all the big business men of the lumber country were selfish brutes. His association with two of them had almost led him to believe that such was the case.

"I shall have something over twelve hundred in the clear," he told his aunt that evening, "and John A. Beaver wants me to take charge of his rafting when the spring opens. I like to work for that man, Aunt Eunice."

"I am glad of that," said his aunt. "I have heard nothing but good spoken of Mr. Beaver."

"He is all right."

Early the next morning Glen mounted Black Jim and galloped back up the river to his logging job, now so nearly finished.

This interesting story leads to very extraordinary situations and dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading to the end. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it.

* * *

He Had a Witness.

One of Australia's best landscape painters was out with his bag of tricks near Daylesford recently. He had pitched in front of an old two-roomed, wattle-and-dab hut, softened with a crimson-flowered creeper, which he thought would make an excellent sketch. While he was working a tall, hairy man came out of the hut and regarded him with some misgiving.

The hut dweller approached. "Watcher doin', mister?" he asked.

"I'm painting your picturesque dwelling," said Patterson.

The hut dweller regarded Patterson dubiously for a minute, then went indoors. Presently he reappeared with his wife, and the two advanced toward the artist. "Mind yeh," said the man, pointing at the painter. "I've got me witness—you're doing this at your own expense."

* * *

Not Satisfied.

The Governor of a Western State was dining with the family of a representative in Congress from that State, and opposite him at table sat the little girl of the family, aged 10. She gazed at the Governor solemnly thruout the repast.

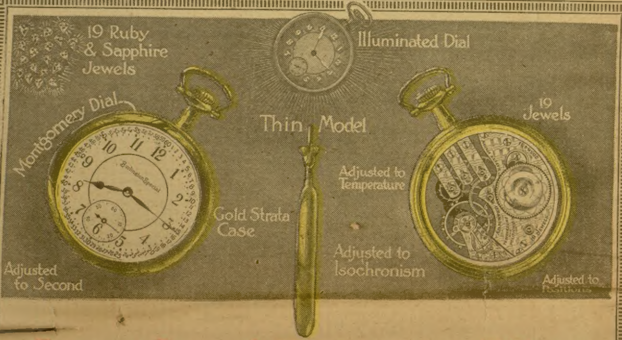
Finally the youngster asked, "Are you really and truly a Governor?"

"Yes," replied the great man, laughingly; "I really and truly am."

"I've always wanted to see a Governor," continued the child, "for I've heard daddy speak of 'em."

"Well," rejoined the Governor, "now that you have seen one, are you satisfied?"

"No, sir," answered the youngster, without the slightest impertinence, but with an air of great conviction. "No, sir; I'm disappointed."



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Strong Jacob of Eden.

(Continued From Page 4.)

ther, but the young brave is dead, and by violence. They say he was killed at the mission. More than that, they burn with tigerish resentment, an' there is surely trouble brewing for Father Caleb and his household!"

CHAPTER VIII.

JUDITH was walking in the forest. She loved its shaded ways, and among the cottonwoods, oaks and ashes, and occasional firs and pines, she found more of contentment than anywhere else. Beauty and solitude calmed her spirit, assuaged her fears, and catered agreeably to her mind. The tangled domain was an old friend, rich in gifts and peace.

On this day her calm would have been less had she known that, half a mile away, men had met at a dueling-ground, and that pistols had been leveled with deadly intentions back of the action.

Trouble was coming from another source, however, and, as she later sat on a log under a lofty fir, footsteps were followed by sight of a broad, gnarled shape that advanced toward her. Half doubled up, and plainly following her trail, Sandy Murch came nearer. Unseen retreat being impossible she remained quiet, hoping she would escape notice, but the trail was traitor to its maker.

The gnarled man finally discovered her and drew himself erect, ducking his uncombed head in a ludicrous attempt to be polite.

"Your servant, miss!" he rumbled, grinning. "Seen you go into the woods."

Judith bowed coldly, but remained silent.

"Follered your trail and come here," he continued. "Like the woods, myself. Born there, raised there, fed there, slept there. Have lived with white-skins, and also Blackfeet, Crows, Snakes, Root-Diggers, Nez Perces and other Injuns. That's me, and I'm the man you see before you, right on this spot. Been at other spots, too. Seen lots o' things."

Judith nodded and made a brief, indifferent reply, whereupon Sandy grew perplexed. Previously laboring under [illegible] that he ought to be full of words, he had expected her to be equally voluble, and grew confused as he found matters otherwise. His soiled fingers rose and scratched his head, he floundered mentally, lost sight of diplomatic beginnings, and came to business with an abrupt plunge.

"Have seen you before I come to Caleb's. It was down in California. Peace Mission, you know."

Judith started and lost color. Sandy was no longer in fog. He and his meaning came into the open, and in a startling manner. She looked at him with consternation and terror pictured in eyes and face.

"Peace Mission," the gnarled man repeated.

"What is this to me?" she faltered.

"Miss, I was there that night you went away, but give me money and I won't tell. It may surprise you, but I like money. Got to have some!"

"Tell?" she murmured unsteadily.

"Yes, speak out, say things, explain. Oh! I was there, an' I heard the whole business. Your chief missionary was named Smith. His assistant was a little chap with flaxen hair—I don't remember his name."

Judith did remember. The flaxen-haired man was named Jacob Lee—the original Jacob. Just now, this was a side issue. Sandy Murch was the central figure.

"I don't want to make it bad for you," he went on hastily. "They might send you away from here, disgraced. It's a bad thing to be disgraced, an' a good reputation is rather to be chosen than a whole lot o' riches—but that don't interfere with a gift to a poor man. Hand over the cash an' I won't tell."

The girl had been allowed time to think, and it was clear that she would run less risk by being firmly defiant than by submitting to blackmail that might have no ending save in deferred calamity. Summoning the resources of her naturally brave nature, she resolved to defy the men.

"You talk foolishly and wildly," she declared.

"I do?" questioned Sandy, staring stupidly. "I don't see how, but—well, the long and short on't is, will you pay me to keep quiet?"

"I certainly will not. Whether you have made an honest mistake or have dreamed something absurd, I don't know, but this talk must end. Enough of foolishness. Good day!" and she rose and prepared to depart.

"Stop, stop!" cried the boatman.

"Not here. Say no more, and be thankful I do not report you to Father Caleb. If you molest me further I will do so, and you will be sent away from the mission. Be warned in time!"

She went, and Sandy, astonished, uncertain, dismayed, and like one bound to the spot, could do no more than stare at her as she receded, and to mutter feebly.

"I don't understand——"

Possessing a feeble mind he did not comprehend, but Judith did, and her resolute front belied her actual feelings. Danger menaced her from a new point of attack, and there was no knowing how soon Murch would pour his story into other ears. Unless he delayed to try blackmail further, revenge might lead him to immediate speech. She carried a heavy heart away from the spot where she had lately found peace.

Beset with confusion and dismay, and anxious to banish harrowing thoughts, she sought for the best way of casting off the weight of dread when she reached the mission, and, as a result, went to the hospital. Offering to relieve Martha Otis at the bedside of Sister Eve, she then tried to concentrate her faculties on the patient.

Altho still unconscious and in the grasp of her disease, the sick girl was progressing fairly well, and her attendants were not wholly discouraged. Youth and strength might triumph over the malady.

Judith bathed the heated brow, and wondered what secret was locked up in the darkened mind, while Sister Eve gazed at her with eyes that held no reason and suddenly fell to talking.

"The forest is dark!" she complained, with a shiver.

"It will soon be light," replied the nurse, gently.

"Seek again for the pass and take me over the range to the prairie beyond. Light, light!—oh! for some way to find the pass! They set the traps in the willows, and I am not there."

"Do not worry," said Judith, tenderly. "You shall go as you wish."

"The lodge is there, but who keeps it? Does the fire burn, or are the ashes cold?"

"Does any one call your name?" Judith asked. "Listen! Do you hear your name? What do they say? Call your name back to them!"

It was a well-intended effort, but the fevered lips spoke no name. Suddenly Sister Eve grew excited.

"The brigade!" she cried wildly. "It is yonder! It is there, and no darkness rests near it. Up, saddle the horses, and let us join the trappers!"

Feeling that information was very near, the nurse tried to stir the lagging faculties further, but received no heed. The patient relapsed into silence, and soon drifted away into the counterfeit slumber that now and then came to her.

Judith cared for her faithfully, wondered who and what she was, and what the nature of her trouble was. Naturally deeply sympathetic, she was now the more so because of her own misfortunes. What was ahead of Sister Eve, and what ahead of herself? She sighed and was full of dread. The false Jacob Lee had been bad enough, but now Sandy loomed nearer yet, an active threat, a creature without remorse, a man who surely knew her secret.

That night she did not join the group at the supper table, but remained above all the time. Looking out, now and then, she saw the various persons come and go—Father Caleb, Jacob Lee, Mark Ballard, Ben Reed, Captain Gregory, and others. There was no sign of hostility, but she gained the idea that the master of Eden was troubled.

The next morning, soon after breakfast, the missionary left the glade accompanied by Mark and Ben, entered a canoe, and crossed the river. It was known that they were going to the village of the Indians called the "lower" Sciorras, and sometimes the Sciorras "below river," but the trip was represented as commonplace, and was generally so regarded by those who remained behind.

To Judith, however, little Indian Abigail soon came with wide-open eyes.

"Why," asked the child, "did the two hunters hide so many weapons in their clothes?"

"What?" Judith returned, startled.

"Father Caleb made them leave their rifles at home, but they hid pistols and knives—oh! so many of them!—in their clothes. They thought nobody saw them do it, but my eyes were on them."

"Mark and Ben did this?"

"Yes. They are going to the Sciorras below river."

Julia's vague impression that trouble was impending received fresh strength, and she questioned the child closely, but gained no additional information except that Mark and Ben had been strangely serious, and had talked together earnestly in private.

"They acted," said Abigail, "like warriors going on the warpath."

Judith shivered. The lower Sciorras were headstrong men, and the secreting of the weapons by bold hunters was ominous. With new trouble mysteriously threatening, the teacher's heart was heavy.

This capital story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

At Barclay House.

(Continued From Page 7.)

a love song, he thought—that came down to him from the swaying tree. Now it sank almost to silence, as the pretty mouth was filled with fruit, and again it would swell in its rich volume.

And still J. Frank did not move or speak. Beautiful creatures like the one in the tree were not often seen among the remote regions about Dogwood, and he was determined to enjoy the stolen paradise while he could.

But just as he began to waver and wonder if his intrusion was not in violation of some vague standard of ethics, the girl turned, and for an instant her eyes rested upon him. She did not in the least appear to be disconcerted, but with the grace of a bird she swung herself outward, caught a bending limb, and dropped lightly to the earth.

Then, with a graceful sweep of her hand across her mouth, as if to brush away any lingering traces of the sticky fruit, she turned her dark, witching face in the direction of the amazed Hartman, and advanced to meet him, a smile upon her lips.

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* * *

Turned the Tables.

A young man who had been snubbed at the theater door decided to get even with his four girl friends.

The girls occupied the first four seats in the sixth row and the young man had the fifth. They paid no attention whatever to him. On the program was a monologist who began to talk of love to get a few laughs, as these artists often do. He said: "All the girls who are in love please stand up."

Turning to the girl next to him the young man who had been snubbed said:

"Please let me out."

Naturally the entire four had to rise. When they were on their feet the young man sat down, while the remainder of the audience roared in glee at the four girls standing up.

* * *

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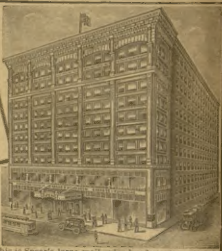

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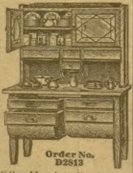

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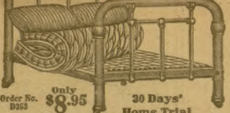

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"It would take a long time to go through just *one* of my warehouses or stores and examine all the contents—getting all the details about each article for the home. Between the covers of my new, Free Catalog you can see and study, as under one roof, thousands of attractive articles for the home. You can take as long a time as you wish to decide—to compare the price and value of any article I offer with any similar goods elsewhere. That is what I would like to have you do. It gives me the chance to *prove* the merits, values and low prices of Spear goods. I like investigation. I *know* Spear goods win on comparison. In fact, I give

30 Days' Home Trial

of any and all articles shown in my Big Catalog. In that way I put your satisfaction up to *you*. *You've got to be pleased with Spear goods or Spear doesn't want your money. I've always sold home goods on that basis and always will.* I *don't even want* you to pay the freight charges if you're not fully satisfied with Spear merchandise. I'll pay all the freight cheerfully, so that you won't be out a penny if Spear goods prove to be misrepresented in any way, in your judgment, and you decide to send them back.

"It's up to *you* to decide, whether you buy from this page direct or from the Spear Catalog. Write me today. Or send the coupon. I will open your charge account at once, as soon as I have your name and address, and will send you my Free Catalog right away. Let me hear from you now.

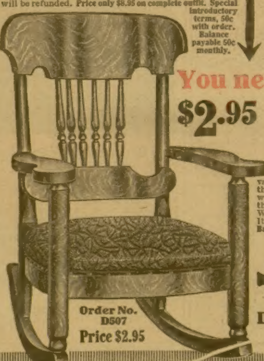
'I Will Trust You Gladly'

wherever you live—it doesn't make any difference where you live or how much money you make. I believe in everyone who works for a living. I want their friendship. They are often the men and women who haven't a whole lot of money to spare all at once to pay for new things. *Write to me* for my bargain book and I will explain to you how I will gladly trust you and how I will open your charge account as soon as I hear from you. My catalog will show you thousands of bargains in

Furniture
Carpets
Rugs
Portieres
Clocks
Go-Carts
Dishes, Guns
Linoleum
Silverware
Lace Curtains
Stoves, Ranges
Sewing Machines
Washing Machines
Springs, Bedding
Mattresses

"My customers know that my business is founded on honesty, fair, square and liberal dealings, politeness and courtesy—on giving more for the money and allowing the longest time to pay. That's why I have so many thousands of *regular* customers. Remember, I *guarantee* without condition or question every article of merchandise sold by the house of Spear."

You never have seen a Rocker Value like this



Order No. D507

Price $2.95

$2.95

A good-looking, comfortable rocker that will give real pleasure and rest to every member of your family. Made of genuine solid oak throughout, with beautifully quarter-sawed back panels. The chair is supplied in either Golden Oak finish or highly glossed rich Mahogany finish. Every joint is carefully *mortised* or *screwed* together. There is no stronger method of construction. The back is high, wide and well curved, which helps to make the chair so comfortable. The arms are gracefully curved and the legs are heavy and strong. The large, roomy seat is covered with exceptionally good brown Spanish Leatherette and carefully upholstered over durable materials and supported by strong, spiral, steel springs. This rocker is a regular $5.50 value which we here offer for the first time at the very special low price of only $2.95. If the chair is not entirely satisfactory when it reaches you, send it back at our expense and we will refund to you at once the first payment of 50c which you have made, as well as the freight you paid. Be sure to state if you want the Golden Oak or Mahogany finish. We guarantee the rocker in both finishes and in every detail. Study the picture carefully. It is an absolutely correct likeness of the chair in every detail. **Terms, 50c cash with order. Balance payable 50c monthly.**

NATHANIEL SPEAR, President

→ Spear & Co. ←

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Spear & Company

Big Book Sent for the Asking —It's FREE!

"This year, in spite of prevailing high prices, I have been very fortunate, through foresight and early purchases, in securing vast quantities of materials and merchandise, including everything for the home, at extremely low figures. This year I am breaking the Spear record. I am selling Furniture and Household Goods at lower prices—and giving better values—than ever before. Prove this by sending for my new, FREE Catalog now. Study it carefully, noting the pictures, descriptions and prices.

"That's the way to prove the facts to your own satisfaction. Proof! That is what I want to give you. Proof! You'll find it in the hundreds of pages of Spear Bargains. Pages and pages and pages of pictures, many in actual colors, with complete and accurate descriptions of all the articles shown and full details of Spear's easy way for you to acquire needed or desired household goods at once, paying only a little at a time. Be sure to write today. It's better to do it right now before you forget it. Then you can get your charge account opened immediately so that whenever you pick out something you want from the Spear Catalog you can have it shipped to you at once."

To Open Your Charge Account MAIL COUPON

Mail This Coupon Today Sure

Spear & Co., Dept. C, Pittsburgh, Pa.

I would like to know all about the Spear Open Account, Easy Payment Plan for home furnishing. Please send me, free, your complete Bargain Catalog with Prices, Terms and Information, without the slightest obligation on my part.

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